

Jewish settlers expand settlement

AVNE HAFEZ (AFP) — Jewish settlers set up 17 mobile homes on Wednesday as part of an expansion of this settlement near the West Bank town of Tulkarm, a military spokesman said. The mobile homes were set up on a hill after the residents of Avne Hafez received the necessary authorisation to expand their settlement, Lieutenant Peter Lerner said. "This is not a new settlement," Lerner stressed. He said the settlers could build permanent structures in place of the mobile homes if they desired. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has pledged not to build new settlements in occupied territory, with the exception of Arab east Jerusalem, which Israel considers its undivided capital. But he has repeatedly asserted in the face of Palestinian protests Israel's right to expand settlements to account for "natural growth" of the population.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الواي

PNA reverses press restrictions

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — A Palestinian cabinet minister rescinded restrictions on foreign reporters Wednesday issued by a Palestinian agency two days earlier. Monday, the Palestinian Information Agency, had ordered foreign reporters to register in advance before entering Palestinian territory and disclose whom they planned to interview on while in Palestinian areas. But Palestinian Information Minister Yasser Abd Rabbo cancelled the regulations and charged that the agency had no authority to issue them. He complained that the restrictions "damage the reputation of the Palestinian Authority and turn it into an oppressive police state." The PAI is a government agency which puts out official news releases and is connected to Palestinian President Yasser Arafat's office.

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Government closes Jazirah TV channel's Amman bureau

By Alia A. Toukan

AMMAN — The government on Wednesday closed down the Amman office of the Doha-based satellite TV station Al Jazirah and summoned the Qatari ambassador to protest against a programme attacking the Kingdom and its regime. "This country does not, and will not accept slander," Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh told reporters following a closed meeting with deputies of the Lower House of Parliament yesterday, where discussion of the Al Jazirah programme figured high on the agenda, according to a lawmaker. Tuesday's programme on Al Jazirah, called "Al-tijah Al Muakass," (the opposite direction), originally set to discuss the fourth anniversary of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, turned into what Jordanian viewers considered a "Jordan bashing" by anchorman Faisal Qassem, and one of his two guest speakers, researcher Mohammad Khalifah, both Syrian, as well as viewers

calling in to comment. Khalifah accused Jordan of conspiring with Israel since its foundation in 1948, and said that the Jordanian army had surrendered Palestinian land to the Israelis "without any resistance." He reportedly said the Hashemites were "rewarded" for siding with "the Zionists" with the creation of Jordan. "Jordan is not a nation, but an artificial entity," said Khalifah, who described the Jordanians as "a bunch of bedouins who live in an arid desert." Former Foreign Minister Kamil Abu Jaber, who also participated in the show via satellite link from Amman, was repeatedly interrupted by both Khalifah and the anchorman, when he attempted to respond. "There is general displeasure at attempts to slander this country," said Tarawneh, in reference to statements made by deputies, commentators and leading politicians on Wednesday. "Jordan is being targeted for reasons that may be

(purely) sensationalist, or may be due to hidden agendas," said Tarawneh, referring to a Syrian-backed media campaign against the Kingdom. "So let them take their sensationalism (elsewhere)," he firmly said, "this country does not need testimony from anyone." The Al Jazirah office received a notice from the Ministry of Information notifying it that the accreditation of its six employees, whether Jordanian or otherwise, has been revoked, in accordance with the Press and Publications Law. Minister of Information Nasser Judeh told the Jordan Times the cancellation of the accreditation of credentials effectively means closing down the Al Jazirah office in Amman. "I am not interested in having an office whose sole concern is to level personal insults against the country," said Judeh. "This is a question of national pride, not of democracy and the Press and Publications law." It is the first time that Jor-

dan closes down a foreign media office. The Foreign Ministry protested to the Embassy of Qatar and demanded "concrete changes," another official told the Jordan Times. "We want Al Jazirah to stop its pattern of targeting Jordan, just like it does not target other countries." "This goes beyond any civilised democratic debate," said the official, adding that Qatar is very keen on maintaining good relations with the Kingdom. Tuesday's show is seen as the latest in a string of Syrian-backed attempts to slander the Kingdom. Last month Syria's Defence Minister Mustafa Tlass accused Jordan of "Judaizing" its people, and of obstructing the Saudi army from crossing the Kingdom to assist the Syrian fight against Israel on the Golan Heights in the 1973 war. Tlass's comments, sparking nation-wide condemnation, were met by a response by the government, which in the past had usually remained silent in the face

of repeated Syrian accusations. The government also revealed that more than 400 Jordanians are missing after entering into Syria, or are being held in Syrian jails. Earlier this week Judeh said that Jordan "will spare no effort to improve matters (with Syria)." But he pointed out that the Kingdom would like to see a lessening of the media campaign. In a statement carried by the Jordan news agency, Petra, Judeh said that "the infamous presenter (Qassem) has deliberately and repeatedly insulted Jordan through different episodes of his show." Judeh also said that Qassem is "out to execute certain policies through his ties to suspect sides. This is obvious because his abuses coincide with the agendas and political agenda of certain sides." Those responsible must apologise officially and publicly, said Judeh, for Jordan to resume any form of coordination with Al Jazirah.



Iraqis demonstrate in Baghdad on Wednesday calling for the expulsion of U.N. arms inspectors, accusing them of being spies. "UNSCOM spies and Zionists out," the demonstrators chanted (AFP photo)

Cohen in Gulf over Iraq crisis; Baghdad defiant

KUWAIT (R) — U.S. Defence Secretary William Cohen tried on Wednesday to whip up support among America's Gulf allies over a new crisis with Iraq, but Baghdad newspapers thundered defiance in the face of possible military attack. During intense round-the-clock diplomacy to persuade Iraq to reverse a decision to suspend cooperation with inspectors searching for banned weapons, Washington and London repeatedly warned that one option to gain compliance was the use of force. But Baghdad newspapers said on Wednesday Iraq would not be cowed. "Empty threats... and vicious behaviour there will not force Iraq to reverse its vicious decision," the weekly Al Ilam said in a front-page editorial. The press also attacked Washington for whipping up anti-Iraqi sentiment. "Iraqi people and leadership are aware of the U.S. designs and they are confident that they can abort these designs," the Iraqi Islamic daily Baghdad Observer said.

British Defence Secretary George Robertson, who agreed on Tuesday in London with Cohen that force was an option and told Iraq to back off, said on Wednesday the crisis was grave. "There is an urgent and serious crisis developing for the world community," Robertson told a meeting of European defence ministers in Vienna. "With one voice there is one signal to Baghdad that compliance with the U.N. is the only alternative for [Iraqi leader] Saddam Hussein at this time." On his crisis mission to rally support, Cohen left Saudi Arabia "confident the U.S. will have the support it needs to take appropriate action." Cohen is expected to get backing in Kuwait before visiting Bahrain, headquarters to the U.S. Fifth Fleet, later on Wednesday. He visits Turkey on Friday. At the United Nations in New York there was general support for a British resolution condemning Saturday's decision to suspend cooperation with inspectors as a "flagrant viola-

tion" of a 1991 resolution that set disarmament rules after the Gulf war. U.N. inspectors in Iraq are overseeing the destruction of weapons of mass destruction as a pre-condition for the lifting of international economic sanctions, imposed to punish Baghdad for the 1990 invasion of Kuwait. Two U.N. technical teams in Iraq went out on Wednesday to check monitoring equipment and change air sampling devices for detecting chemicals in the atmosphere. Baghdad has suspended cooperation but is allowing inspectors to maintain surveillance. "This is a very tiny proportion of the monitoring activities that we would normally carry out," a U.N. spokeswoman said. There was to be further closed door consultations at the United Nations on Wednesday over the British resolution which does not threaten force but which aims to isolate Iraq and maintain unity among all 15 U.N. council members.

Israel demands written commitments, PNA refuses

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The Palestinians on Wednesday refused U.S. and Israeli demands to submit "clarifications" to their security plan to combat Palestinian extremism that was given to the United States as part of the Wye River land-for-security agreement. "We will not submit any clarifications to any of the points in the security plan," the head of Palestinian internal security in the Gaza Strip, Mohammad Dahlan, told AFP. Meanwhile, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he would not convene his cabinet to approve the agreement until he receives Palestinian commitments in writing. Netanyahu's aides said the prime minister was waiting for details about how and when Palestinian President Yasser Arafat's security forces planned to capture and imprison 30 Palestinians accused of involvement in killing Israelis. The United States is expected to provide a written guarantee for the arrest of the 30 men in question Wednesday, the Israeli daily Yediot Aharonot said. "I will convene the cabinet when what was agreed on in Wye will be complete," Netanyahu told Israel Radio. "There are no new demands of the Palestinians. The requirement to receive the commitments in writing is not new," he stressed. But Dahlan, who was one of the principal Palestinian negotiators at Wye River, said: "In the [Wye River] accord, as in our plan, there is nothing about the arrest of 30 people." "We have presented our plan to the Americans as required. Israel has nothing to do with it. We shared our plan with the Americans and received a positive response," he said. Dahlan added that Israeli armed forces chief Shaul Mofaz and Ami Ayalon, head of Israel's Shin Bet internal security force, had also found the security proposal satisfactory. But Yediot Aharonot said that the Shin Bet chief had urged Netanyahu to postpone the cabinet meeting because the Palestinian plan is not good enough. "The Palestinian plan to

fight terrorism is superficial. It lacks certain principal components," a security source said. U.S. State Department spokesman James Rubin said on Tuesday that "some clarifications must be made" to the Palestinian security plan, including the creation of a "timetable" for the arrest of the 30 Palestinians. The remarks came after a U.S. State Department spokesman had said one day before that "everything is fine" with the Palestinian plan. "We are stunned by Rubin's contradiction," chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat told AFP earlier Wednesday. "I think that Mr. Rubin should be better informed of the facts, so as not to spread ideas based on false information supplied to him by certain people," he said. "We presented the United States with a security plan which is clear and which the Americans have judged satisfactory," said Nabil Abu Rudeina, a spokesman for Palestinian President Arafat. Rudeina called on the United States to "intervene immediately to save the situation," adding that Netanyahu was "returning to a policy of time-wasting and unjustifiable delays." Netanyahu said when he would convene the cabinet depended on the Palestinians. "When they fulfill their commitments we will give them what we agreed to," he said. According to the Israeli daily Haaretz: "There was a verbal agreement at Wye to imprison Palestinians at each third [phase] of the agreement on a 10-10-10 basis." The first third of the agreement was due to be implemented two weeks after the agreement entered into force. Implementation of the second third is scheduled for the sixth week and the remaining third for the 10th week. "Now the prime minister wants that verbal agreement put in writing for the cabinet meeting," government sources told Haaretz. But a top U.S. official speaking on condition of anonymity rejected the notion that the accord would, as Israel asserts, compel Palestinians to jail the 30 suspects immediately.

Arafat: Total fulfilment of Israel's security demands impossible

MADRID (AP) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat said Wednesday the latest Israeli condition for ratifying the new land-for-security deal had been partially met but suggested that total fulfilment was impossible. Arafat was responding to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's demand for written guarantees that the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) would arrest all 30 men on a list of suspects wanted for killing Israelis. "We have detained 12 of them and we will continue working on this 100 per cent," Arafat said after Wednesday talks with Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar. "But... nobody can ask us to achieve 100 per cent results." The peace accord negotiated at Wye Plantation and signed Oct. 23 in Washington commits Israel to withdraw from an additional 13 per cent of the West Bank in

exchange for a Palestinian crackdown on Islamists who oppose peace with Israel. But Israel reiterated Wednesday that it would not carry out the agreement until it received assurances from Arafat's PNA that it would arrest all 30 suspects. Aides to Netanyahu said in occupied Jerusalem that the Israeli cabinet would not be convened to ratify the accord until Israel got a written guarantee from the United States. At a press conference with Arafat, Aznar said that the Spanish government considered that the Palestinians were fulfilling all their obligations in the Wye Plantation accord and that he "hoped to soon be able to say the same about Israel." Arafat said the 12 detained were arrested before Netanyahu's latest demand. Palestinian security officials have previously said that several of the men on the

list had been arrested and tried, but had not given a specific number. Arafat also suggested that Israel had a responsibility to deal with extremist groups of its own. "The extremists that exist on both sides are cooperating in order to wreck the peace process," he said. "We should not forget that Rabin was assassinated by Israeli extremists." The head of the PNA said that the Mideast peace process had inevitably slowed since the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin three years ago, and Netanyahu's coming to power in 1996. But Arafat claimed that 74 per cent of the Israeli population favoured the latest U.S.-backed peace initiative, and said he had conceded Netanyahu's request for a 10-day postponement after a call from U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.

U.S.: Israeli demands beyond deal

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States said on Wednesday that Israel's demand for an arrests timetable from the Palestinians went beyond the Wye Plantation agreement signed in Washington last month. The agreement already lays out the procedure to follow if the Israelis want the Palestinians to make arrests, State Department spokesman James Rubin told his daily briefing. "There is a mechanism to deal with that issue

[requests for arrests]. It is being dealt with. And we do not believe that the Palestinians are failing to act in conformity with the agreement," he said. The United States refers to Israel's demands as requests for clarifications. "Clarifications can be sought and may or may not be achieved. And that doesn't change the fact that in general they [the Palestinians] have met the requirements of the agreement," the State Department spokesman said.

German president to visit Jordan Nov. 17

By Lima Nabil

AMMAN — German President Roman Herzog is due in Amman on Nov. 17 for a state visit to Jordan as part of a tour of the Middle East region which also includes the Palestinian territories and Israel. The president will lead a high level delegation and will discuss with HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, and senior Jordanian officials the latest developments in the peace process and the Wye River agreement. German sources said. The sources described

Jordanian-German relations as excellent noting that Jordan is among the top countries to receive German assistance that during four decades reached around DM 2 billion. Jordan receives between DM 50 million and DM 60 million annually. Germany finances part of Jordan's water projects and other forms of development and has signed three agreements for rescheduling the Kingdom's debt to Germany. Herzog's discussions will also cover bilateral ties and German-financed

projects in the country, according to the source. Several German experts and researchers in water, archaeology, culture and social affairs are currently working in the Kingdom, the source noted. Herzog, who will be accompanied by his wife, is expected to meet Palestinian President Yasser Arafat in Ramallah to discuss German assistance to the Palestinian National Authority before paying a private visit to Israel. Herzog's visit to Jordan will be the first since he was elected four years ago.

Israeli secret service using Canadian passports despite pledge — report

TORONTO (AFP) — Israel's secret service is still trying to use Canadian passports a year after two agents were caught with forged documents during a botched assassination attempt, a television station here reported. In a Tuesday evening broadcast on the private English-language station CTV, Leslie Lewis, a 55-year-old Canadian Jew who left Vancouver to live in Israel in 1991, said he had

given his passport to the Mossad in 1996. He said he handed over the passport to the Mossad after the intelligence agency told him it would be used to help Jews escape from countries where they were oppressed. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office denied the report in a statement Wednesday. "These reports are completely baseless," the statement said.

In Ottawa, Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy said his department and the country's intelligence services had investigated Lewis' claims before the television broadcast this week and had found nothing to substantiate them. "We continue to take the passport issue seriously," Axworthy told reporters. "We also take very seriously any representations about abuse of our passports." At the end of September

1997, two Mossad agents involved in the failed murder of a Hamas leader, Khaled Misha'al, were arrested in Jordan carrying falsified Canadian passports. The incident sparked a diplomatic row between Canada and Israel, which was calmed only after Israel apologised and promised its spies would not use Canadian passports again. But according to Lewis, soon after the 1997 crisis,

the Mossad contacted him again twice. The second time, in February 1998, they asked him to give them his daughter's passport. He refused. Lewis told the television station that at least one other Canadian who had been approached recently by Israel's secret service had handed over his passport. Lewis said he had warned the Canadian embassy in Israel but that diplomats had

shown little interest. Axworthy denied this and insisted Canadian investigators had been unable to find any corroboration of Lewis' claims. A parliamentary review committee had concluded as recently as Oct. 28 that the Canadian passports used by the Israeli agents were good forgeries. Other reports had said that the documents may have been legitimately issued, then stolen or obtained by other means.

كندا من لاجل

'Israel refuses to allow opening of Gaza airport'

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Israel has refused to allow the opening of Gaza international airport in time for the return of Palestinian President Yasser Arafat from a visit to Spain, a Palestinian official said on Wednesday.

"The Israeli side has not agreed to the opening of the airport after we had decided to start operations on the fifth of this month," Fayez Zeidan, the head of Palestinian civil aviation, told AFP.

"There were no results from the meeting of the [joint Israeli-Palestinian] airport committee held last night. The Israeli side told me that it wouldn't be possible for the plane carrying President Yasser Arafat to land at the airport tomorrow," Zeidan said.

Palestinians say that, under the terms of an unpublished protocol which forms part of the 12-day old Wye River memorandum, the airport is due to open on Nov. 5.

Senior Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat accused the Israeli government on Monday of "manoeuvring" in seeking to block the opening of the Gaza airport.

Arafat, who is currently on an official trip to Spain, was supposed to be the first passenger to use the airport. "Contacts with the Israeli side are still going on to fix a new date for the opening," Zeidan said, adding that the Israelis have agreed to release equipment for the airport which has been held up in Ashdod port for several months.

The airport delay comes amid Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's refusal to present the Wye River land-for-security agreement to his cabinet for ratification.

Netanyahu has argued that a Palestinian document detailing security commitments is incomplete as it does not include an undertaking to arrest 30 men accused of murdering Israelis.

The Wye River accord was supposed to enter into force on Monday but Netanyahu has asked for a postponement until the agreement is ratified by his cabinet and parliament despite the fact that the accord makes no allowance for this eventuality.

Israeli informer to be charged over Rabin assassination

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Israel's attorney general announced Wednesday on the third anniversary of the murder of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin that a former secret service informer would be charged for failing to prevent the assassination.

Elyakim Rubinstein said charges would be filed against Avishai Raviv, a right-wing Jewish extremist suspected of inciting right-wing comrades to activism while handing over information to the Shin Bet, Israel's internal security service.

"I decided to indict Raviv for failing to prevent the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin and for incitement to racism," Rubinstein told reporters.

"Raviv did not know about the plan to assassinate Rabin on Nov. 1995,

but he knew the assassin well and he knew that he had plans to kill Rabin," he said.

Raviv, codenamed "Champagne," is suspected of being associated with Yigal Amir, the Jewish militant who gunned down Rabin in a bid to halt the government's policy of transferring West Bank land to the Palestinians.

However, Rubinstein denied charges that the Shin Bet knew about the planned assassination. Raviv did not inform his superiors about what he heard from Amir, he said.

Shin Bet officials have insisted since the assassination that Raviv never informed his handlers of the plans of Amir, who is serving a life sentence for the murder.

Justice ministry officials were initially opposed to

laying charges against Raviv because of insufficient evidence, but there has been significant pressure from right-wing circles for the former informer to be charged in the case.

The Israeli right has used the Raviv case to deflect accusations by Rabin's Labour Party that it contributed to his murder with a virulent campaign of anti-government protests in the months running up to the assassination.

Last month, Margalit Har-Shefi, a friend of Amir, was sentenced to nine months in prison for failing to prevent the assassination.

Yigal Amir's brother, Hagai, who is serving a 12-year prison sentence for complicity in the murder, filed suit against Raviv in June accusing him of inciting violence and seeking \$1.4 million in damages.



DEMONSTRATION IN TEHRAN MARKING EMBASSY SEIZURE: Iranian students gather Wednesday in front of a poster depicting a young student killed in the Iran-Iraq war before joining thousands of other students to demonstrate in front of the former U.S. embassy (AP photo)

Saudis say Ben Laden not responsible for bombings

KUWAIT (AP) — Islamist Osama Ben Laden was not directly responsible for bombings in Saudi Arabia that left 26 dead, Saudi Arabia's interior minister said in an interview published Wednesday.

The United States suspects Ben Laden of financing several terrorist strikes around the world, including the June 1996 bombing of Khobar

Towers, a U.S. military complex in the Saudi city of Dhahran. Nineteen U.S. servicemen were killed and about 500 people were injured in that blast.

U.S. officials are still investigating whether Ben Laden was behind a November 1995 blast in Riyadh that left five American servicemen and two Indian nationals dead.

"It has been reported and said the bombing in Khobar and... Riyadh were masterminded by Ben Laden, but this is not true," Prince Nayef Ben Abdul Aziz told Al-Siyasah daily.

Prince Nayef, however, said it was possible that the attacks were carried out by others who "adopted his ideas." He did not elaborate.

Six dead, 20 wounded in Algeria violence

ALGIERS (AFP) — Six people were killed and 20 were wounded on Wednesday in two separate attacks blamed on Islamists, security services reported.

Six civilians were killed and three were injured overnight Tuesday in the town of Oued Sly, near Chlef, some 200 kilometers southwest of Algiers.

The security services gave no details of the circumstances of the killings.

The Chlef area has seen a series of massacres of civilians blamed on armed Islamists, despite a truce observed the last 14 months by the Islamic Salvation

Army (AIS), the armed wing of the outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS).

Chlef was considered a bastion of the AIS, but other extremist movements are active in Algeria, notably the hardline Armed Islamic Group (GIA), and the FIS consider themselves bound by the truce.

Elsewhere, 21 travellers were wounded on Wednesday morning when a bomb exploded under a bus on the road between Blida and Medea, south of Algiers.

Two of the wounded were in serious condition, according to a security services communiqué.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Church of Holy Sepulchre to get new door

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The Church of the Holy Sepulchre will get its first new door since being rebuilt by the Crusaders eight centuries ago, an Israeli official announced on Wednesday. The three Christian communities responsible for maintaining the holiest site in the Christian world have agreed upon the new door in time for the millennium, said Uri Mor, head of relations with Christian communities at Israel's ministry of religious affairs. "I have been trying for five years to get the communities to agree but they are afraid of changing the status quo," Mor told AFP. He stressed that Christian communities have yet to agree on the exact placement of the new door.

Arab news agencies to meet in Beirut

BEIRUT (AFP) — The Federation of Arab National Agencies (FANA) will hold its 26th general assembly meeting in Beirut Nov. 20-22, the group's president, Rafik Shihab, told AFP on Wednesday. Shihab, director of Lebanon's official ANI news agency, said the meeting will focus on "increasing cooperation with international news agencies, mainly Agence France Presse (AFP), which has expressed readiness for full cooperation with FANA." The meeting's participants will also discuss other FANA activities and the possibility of establishing a common Arab economic news service at a member agency, Shihab said.

First Arab organisation for handicapped

CAIRO (AFP) — Twelve Arab countries on Wednesday founded the first non-governmental organisation to assist the roughly 25 million handicapped people in the Arab World, a health official said. The Arab Organisation for the Handicapped (AOH) will be based in Beirut and will have a \$500,000 budget over the next two years to create greater awareness for the handicapped. AOH chief Nawaf Kabbani told reporters here. The AOH was established by Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, the Palestinian National Authority, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

Turkish comic ends hunger strike

ISTANBUL (R) — Popular Turkish comedian and impersonator Levent Koca has given up a much-trumpeted hunger strike after just a few hours after politicians promised to try to ease stringent broadcasting laws. Koca told a late-night television show on Tuesday he had put off the protest after politicians assured him they would work to change laws which allowed the Kanal D television channel to be blacked out for a day over one of his weekly shows.

'Kuwait set for \$500m U.S. artillery deal'

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwait's defence ministry plans to purchase 48 artillery pieces from the United States as part of a deal worth \$500 million, an army spokesman said in remarks published on Wednesday. "There is a strong intention within the defence ministry to approve [the purchase of] the U.S. cannons in the near future to be one of the main weapons in the Kuwaiti army," Al Qabas daily quoted Colonel Ahmad Al Rahmani as saying. MP Mubarak Al Duweili has charged that the howitzers are overpriced and unsuitable for Kuwait's armed forces.

Sudanese foreign minister lashes out at U.S. sanctions

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Sudanese Foreign Minister Mustafa Osman Ismail has lashed out at Washington over an economic and trade embargo and the freezing of Khartoum government assets in the United States.

Ismail told the press, which reported that U.S. President Bill Clinton had informed the U.S. Congress that the administration was extending the year-old embargo, that the move was "unjustified and lacks in evidence and arguments."

Washington has placed Sudan on its blacklist of countries held to be sponsoring state terrorism as well as violating human rights, and Khartoum newspapers said that Clinton

sent a message to Congress in the past two days stating that such practices were a threat to U.S. security.

Ismail on Tuesday met President Omar Bashir and subsequently said that the reported decision was "a routine resolution coming in the context of the hostile American campaign against Sudan."

"Sudan has succeeded in dealing with and containing the adverse effects of the embargo," he added, according to Wednesday's press, and stated that "we will continue denouncing this unilateral resolution in all international and regional forums."

According to Ismail, representing a military-based government backed by Islamists, the U.N. General Assembly has almost unanimously condemned the sanctions, with only the United States and Israel in favour of them.

Ismail added that he had briefed Bashir on developments in a mediation initiative by Qatar to normalise ties between Sudan and Eritrea, where the Asmara government is host to members of a coalition of Sudanese opposition forces including southern rebels, exiled northern politicians and their own military wing.

Assembly approves state of emergency

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudan's parliament has approved President Omar Hassan Al Bashir's call for a state of emergency in four states to combat robbery, newspapers said on Wednesday. Private newspapers reported that many parliament members from the states, Northern Darfur, Southern Darfur, Western Darfur and Northern Kordofan, opposed the declaration, saying it would interfere with civil liberties. In the past, state-level emergencies, usually called over tribal conflict and robbery, have meant tighter security, checkpoints and searches of public and private buildings. "The laws currently in place are sufficient to get rid of armed robbery," the independent Al Rai Al Aam newspaper quoted member of parliament Mekki Bahli as saying.

A foreign ministry source confirmed to AFP that Ismail plans to leave for Doha in Qatar next week for a meeting with his Eritrean counterpart under the auspices of Qatar Foreign Minister Hamad Ben Gassim Al Thani.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 477311-19

PROGRAMME TWO

Thursday Programmes

15:10 Cartoon — Superman
15:30 Drama — Adventures of
Huckleberry Finn
16:00 Life on the Edge
16:00 French Programme
18:15 Sliders — Sparks
19:00 Le Journal
19:15 Science Magazine —
L'Esprit de Colomb
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Comedy — Family Matters
20:00 Drama — Museums of the World
20:30 Drama — Dr. Quinn the
Medicine Woman
21:10 Oprah Winfrey
22:00 News in English
22:30 Feature film — "Frank and
Jesse"
23:59 Comedy — The Boys
00:30 End of T.N.

Friday Programmes

15:10 The Toy Top
15:30 Treasure Hunt
16:00 French film
18:15 The Simpsons
19:00 Le Journal
19:15 French Programme —
Allo La Tere
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Comedy — The Fresh
Prince of Bel-Air
20:00 Cinema, Cinema
20:30 Babylon-5
21:10 Fat Cat Thin Mice
22:00 News in English
22:30 The X-Files
23:10 The Halifax
23:59 End of T.N.

PRAYER TIMES

04:32 Fajr

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

05:51 Sunrise Doha

11:19 Dhuhr

14:21 Asr

16:48 Maghrib

18:06 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church

Sweidieh, Tel. 5920740

Assemblies of God Church Tel.

4632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590

Terra Sancta Church Tel.

4622366

Anglican Church Tel.

4624853/4624811

St. Afrem Syrian Orthodox

Church Tel. 4771751

Armenian International Church

Tel. 5865897

German-speaking Evangelical

Congregation Tel. 5688404

The Evangelical Local Church

in Amman Tel. 5811295

Church of Jesus Christ of Lat-

ter Day Saints Tel. 4654932

St. John the Baptist at De la

Salle College Tel. 5661757

Church of the Annunciation

Tel. 4637440

Greek Orthodox Church Tel.

4646138

Church of Presentation, Swe-

idieh Tel. 5920146

The Uniate Catholic Church

Tel. 4624757

The English-Language

Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190

Evangelical Free Church Tel.

4892679

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Depart-

ment of Meteorology

Temperatures are expected to

rise becoming about six

degrees centigrade above aver-

age and winds southeasterly

moderate. In Aqaba, winds

will be northerly moderate to

active, and seas calm.

Amman 13/28

Aqaba 18/31

Deserts 11/31

Jordan Valley 19/32

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 27, Aqaba 29

Humidity readings: Amman

24 per cent, Aqaba 43 per

cent.

Following are the highest tem-

peratures expected today in the

following areas:

Ajloun 22

Jerash 29

Um Qays 28

Madaba 27

Petra 29

Dead Sea 32

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

The Baptist Church Tel.

4628052

The Armenian Catholic

Church Tel. 567585

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Walid Al Masi 567585

Dr. Youssef Rashid 4875792

Dr. Ahmad Manna 5359413

Dr. Khalil Jhal 4784450

AMMAN:

Firas Pharmacy 5661912

Al Salam Pharmacy 4636730

Mayadah Pharmacy 5537004

Rukn Al Dawa Pharmacy 5536169

IRBID:

Dr. Lutfi Shilbi 02241798

Fou'ad Pharmacy 02275360

ZARQA:

Dr. Walid Halaseh 09982799

Palestine Pharmacy 09983562

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 4637111

Civil Defence Department 5661111

Civil Defence Immediate Res-

cue 4630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192 4621111, 4637777

Fire Brigade 4671701

Blind Bank 4775121

Highway Police 5343402

Traffic office 4896390

Public Security Dept. 4630321

Price Complaints 5661176

Wage & Social Complaints 489467

Amman Municipality Com-

plaints 4787111

Telephone Information (directo-

ry assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 0132

Central Amman Telephone Roy-

als 4623101

Abdali Tel. Repair 5661101

Jordan Television 4773111

Radio Jordan 4774111

Water Authority 5680100

J. Electricity Authority 5815615

Electric Power Co. 4636381

RJ Flight Information 44-53200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 44-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

The Arab Centre for Heart and

Special Surgery 5921199

The Islamic, Ahlbi 5666131/7

Husseini Medical Centre 5856856

Luzmila 4630195

Khalidi Maternity 4642816

Jabal Amman Maternity 4642362

Mahbas, J. Amman 4636140

Palestine, Shmiesan 5607071

Shmiesan Hospital 5607431

Jordan Hospital 5607550

University Hospital 5353444

Al-Muasher Hospital 5667279

Al-Ahli, Abdali 5644164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajreen 4771013

Al-Bashir 4775111/26

Army, Marka 4891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital 5157100

Amal Hospital 5607155

Al Amal Cancer Centre 5353000



Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh speaks to reporters Wednesday following his closed-door meeting with deputies (Photo by Yousef Allan)

Tarawneh assures deputies of King's positive response to treatment

By a Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh reassured deputies during a closed-door meeting yesterday that His Majesty King Hussein, currently undergoing medical treatment in the U.S., is responding positively to treatment.

He added that the Monarch, who has been in the Mayo Clinic receiving chemotherapy treatment for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma since July, has finished the fifth chemotherapy session and will begin the sixth and final one soon.

In his first general meeting with lawmakers, Tarawneh also praised the King's role in the signing of the recent Wye River accord.

"The King's role in the accord reflects his continuous

efforts in securing Palestinian rights and his full commitment to the ongoing peace process," the prime minister told deputies.

He described the accord as "transitional," leading to final status negotiations, and warned that "we should not accord this agreement more than its actual worth."

On the Iraqi front, the prime minister warned of the grave consequences that could hit Iraq and the region if the Iraq-U.N. stand-off following Baghdad's decision to suspend cooperation with U.N. inspectors escalates.

"We warn that this crisis might lead to a military confrontation," Tarawneh said. "Should this happen, it will affect mostly the Iraqi people and Jordanians."

"The situation is serious and could, God forbid, result in a

disaster," he said.

Both Lower House Speaker Sa'd Hayel Srour and the prime minister also stressed on the importance of intensifying dialogue and cooperation between the executive and legislative authorities, as well as other sectors of society.

"When we call for national dialogue, we don't necessarily mean that the government must always be party to that dialogue," Tarawneh told reporters following yesterday's meeting.

While some deputies were disappointed by the "unfocused" meeting, others like Deputy Ali Abul Ragheb described the meeting as "good."

"Though it addressed a wide variety of issues, it was a good meeting and one that was frank," Abul Ragheb told the Jordan Times.

Groups opposed to peace process smuggling arms into Jordan — PM

Tarawneh says Netanyahu 'serious' about Wye accord

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh on Wednesday said Palestinian groups opposed to the Middle East peace process, the Palestinian National Authority and Jordan have been smuggling arms to the Kingdom with the intention of carrying out armed attacks and destabilising the country's internal security.

"We are dismayed at and strongly reject such an attitude and actions against the Kingdom and believe that such issues can be settled through dialogue," Tarawneh was quoted as saying in an interview with the Kuwaiti newspaper Al Ra'i Al Aam.

Referring to a file that included details about terrorist acts carried out or planned in Jordan which His Majesty King Hussein gave to Syrian President Hafez Assad at a 1996 summit in Cairo, the prime minister said Amman never received a reply from Damascus.

"We are concerned over this issue, especially as the file contains details of serious cases that should not be allowed to continue and because security relations among nations are of paramount importance," he added.

Tarawneh said the Syrians froze the work of the joint Jordanian-Syrian committee in 1990 and have not appointed an ambassador to serve in Jordan since 1993.

Jordan does not understand the reason behind Syria's "hostility" towards the Kingdom especially, Tarawneh said, since this attitude had been adopted by Damascus before the 1994 Jordan-Israeli peace treaty.

The prime minister noted that the Syrians, like the Jordanians, took part in the 1991 Madrid peace conference.

Tarawneh said the Jordan-Israeli peace treaty does not harm Syria's interests.

Referring to Jordanian detainees in Syria, the prime minister said the Syrian authorities are currently holding 500 Jordanians in prison and are harassing visitors at a time when Jordan is hosting 120,000 Syrian nationals who entered and are working in the Kingdom without visas.

"Why are Jordanians held up at the border by the Syrian authorities and accused of being agents of the Mossad or the CIA?" asked the prime minister.

"I suggest that the Syrian leadership put an end to the crisis it has created and instead help maintain good relations between the Syrian and Jordanian peoples, who should not pay the price of wrong political stands."

On relations between Jordan and Kuwait, Tarawneh said he believed that they are improving.

"We have told the Kuwaitis that we are ready to reopen our embassy in Kuwait and we have exchanged visits by officials. In addition, the Kuwaiti embassy in Amman is open," he said.

"I believe bilateral ties are progressing and have reached an advanced stage, and it is just a matter of time until these relations will be fully restored," added Tarawneh.

On the Wye River accord between the Palestinians and the Israelis, Tarawneh said: "The agreement provides for the restoration of 13 per cent of the Palestinian territories and the release of 750 Palestinian detainees from Israeli jails, among other issues. I cannot understand the attitude of the

Palestinian extremists who reject the agreement."

Asked if Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is serious about implementing the accord, the prime minister replied: "I believe that this time he is serious, because despite his earlier adamant stands and his rejection of Palestinian demands, he signed the deal. What is important now is the Israeli Knesset's ratification of the accord."

Asked about Jordan's stand vis-à-vis final status negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, he said: "Jordan and the Palestinians are coordinating their positions and actions because our goal is their goal — the creation of an independent Palestinian state. Jordan's position is that every part of Palestinian land occupied in 1967 should be returned to Palestinian authority. However, Jordan has its own interests in terms of security, economic relations and common borders."

In reply to a question on the prospects of bringing water to Jordan from the Euphrates River, Tarawneh said: "We are considering this project seriously but we are confronted by the U.N. sanctions [on Iraq] and problems which should first be settled in accordance with international legitimacy."

Tarawneh reiterated Jordan's call for a dialogue between Baghdad and Washington to settle the main issues obstructing an agreement that would pave the way for an end to the sanctions.

In an interview on Jordanian-Israeli relations four years after the signing of the peace treaty broadcast Wednesday on Israeli radio, the prime minister said ties are stable and the basic provisions of the treaty have been respected.

"Israel pulled out from Jordanian territory, the common border has been demarcated and the water issue solved, but on the economic side not much has been achieved," said Tarawneh.

The prime minister expressed hope that outstanding issues would be settled after the implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli accord, which he said will open the way for economic and trade links between Jordan, the Palestinians and Israel.

Information ministry to have final say in foreign journalists' accreditation — PPD

New regulations to end press association bid to approve correspondents

By Amy Henderson

AMMAN — The Press and Publications Department Wednesday announced it will submit new regulations for the accreditation of foreign correspondents to the Legal Department at the Prime Ministry on Saturday.

PPD Director Iyad Qattan said a new paragraph will be added to both the 1998 Press and Publications and Jordan Press Association laws that will give the minister of information final jurisdiction in accrediting

foreign reporters. The move ends what many journalists described as a bid by the JPA to control the foreign press, which is otherwise excluded from membership privileges in the association.

In late October, the JPA requested that all foreign journalists obtain permission from the association to work in the country and announced that it would — "with regret" — ban any "unaccredited" foreign correspondent from writing.

JPA President Seif Sherif justified the request by saying that the controversial 1998 Press and Publications and association laws, passed only last summer, required that "correspondents of periodicals and foreign media must be Jordanians, Arabs or foreigners who obtained permission from the Jordan Press Association to work after getting approval from the [information] minister."

The JPA also said it required that each foreign journalist produce "a licence to practise journalism in their country of origin" and a one-year work permit.

The foreign press, which has its own informal association that hosts regular meetings with Cabinet members, accused the association of meddling in affairs that fell outside of its jurisdiction and countered that they "did not [recognise] accreditation by the JPA since it is an association for Jordanian journalists and not for the foreign press." They also contended that journalists in foreign, especially Western, countries did not hold licences to practise since, in their countries of origin, requiring a licence would be a violation of human rights.

According to Qattan, the new regulations would ensure that all required papers will be forwarded from the Information Ministry to the JPA, which will "routinely approve" journalists and "return the papers to the Information Ministry, which has the final and only say in accreditation."

Randa Habib, bureau chief of Agence France Presse in Amman, said that "members of the foreign press feel that the new terms are satisfactory."

Czech delegation meets with Srour

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation of four senators from the Czech Republic on Wednesday met with the speaker of the Lower House of Parliament, Sa'd Hayel Srour, and discussed Jordanian-Czech parliamentary cooperation.

The talks also covered developments in the Middle East peace process and Jordan's position on the situation in the region.

The head of the delegation, Frantisek Vizek, expressed his country's desire to promote Jordanian-Czech parliamentary relations and praised the role of His Majesty King Hussein in seeking the establishment of a permanent and comprehensive peace.

Also Wednesday, the

Czech official met with Minister of Education Fawzi Gharaibeh and was briefed on the Jordanian educational system and plans for modernisation.

Gharaibeh expressed Jordan's readiness to launch cooperation and exchange expertise in teaching languages, sciences and physics with the Czech Republic.

dan's position on the situation in the region.

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Also Wednesday, the

what's going on

FILMS

* "Islamic Art in the Mamluk Heritage" (with commentary in Arabic by Dr. Mazin Asfour) at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh on Thursday at 5:30 p.m.

* Spanish film "Tirano Banderas" at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman on Thursday at 5:00 p.m. (Tel. 4610858).

RUGBY FOOTBALL MATCH

* Jordan Rugby Football Club plays against the 1st Light Infantry from the British Army at the Sports City polo ground on Friday Nov. 6 at 3:00 p.m.

REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE

* A Service of Remembrance at the Church of the Holy Redeemer on Saturday Nov. 7 at 6:00 p.m. (Tel. 4610858).

EXHIBITIONS

* "Jordan Yesterday and Today" (marking His Majesty King Hussein's birthday) at the Amman International Fair, Marj Al Hamam, until Nov. 6.

* A three-dimensional exhibition on canvas by Susana Caldwell, Darleen Karpowicz, and Rawati Abu Ghazaleh Silawi at the Jordan Arts and Crafts Centre (Artesano), Jabal Amman, off the second circle, until Nov. 10 (Tel. 4647858).

* "Masterworks of the Spanish Contemporary Architecture and Presentation of Architecture Guide: Spain 1930-2007" at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman, until Nov. 6.

* Ceramics by Ra'd and Ahmad Al Dalami at Hammurabi Arts Gallery, Gardens St. (Tel. 5536098), until Nov. 5.

* Exhibition of works by Palestinian artist Kamal Boullata entitled "Homage to Jerusalem" — an exhibition of paintings by late Palestinian artist Zulfia Al Sa'di — an exhibition by Palestinian-American photographer Sa'di Nuseibeh entitled "The Farthest Mosque" at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, until Nov. 12 (Tel. 4643251/2).

Rise and fall: Crusader castle excavations reveal long-term strategic importance of Petra

By Francesca Ciriaci

PETRA — History has been shaped by events that have led to consequences far removed from, or in many cases diametrically opposed to, the original intention of the figures that set them in motion.

A major historical example of this feature in Jordan is provided by the Crusaders, whose use of the Transjordan as the heart of their defensive system in the Holy Land highlighted the importance of this territory and contributed to the emergence of national identity and aspirations of autonomy among its peoples, according to the thesis of an Italian historian.

"The outcome of the brief Crusader campaign in the Transjordan revealed to the Arab World the crucial importance of this region, and beyond the intentions of both sides, this experience played an important role in the emergence of a national identity," says Professor Guido Vannini from the Department of History at the University of Florence.

As had happened twice before in history — during the Nabataean/Roman and Byzantine periods — the fortunes of the Transjordan under the Crusaders were reflected in the vicissitudes of the ancient city of Petra.

For an 80-year period, until the 1187 Hattin battle which marked the victory of the Muslim armies of Salah Al Din over the Western invaders, the historic conditions that had already made the fortunes of Petra twice before rematerialised and, once again, the rose-red city became the focal point of a defensive system.

"The capital of the first pre-Islamic Arab empire [the Nabataeans] had already started declining during the late

Byzantine period, when it lost its function as a frontier post," Vannini says.

"With its entry into the Islamic state, Petra again lost its function, and with it all the Transjordan lost its importance again."

"But the Crusaders proved to the Islamic World, which traditionally revolved around the two axes of Egypt and Syria, how important Petra and the Transjordan still were."

The Crusaders' defence of their eastern frontier in the Holy Land was based on a string of castles strategically placed along the Jordan, from Gerasa (Jerash) and Amman in the north, to Aqaba castle (ancient Ayla) and the Ile de Graye (Egypt's modern Pharos Island) in the Red Sea.

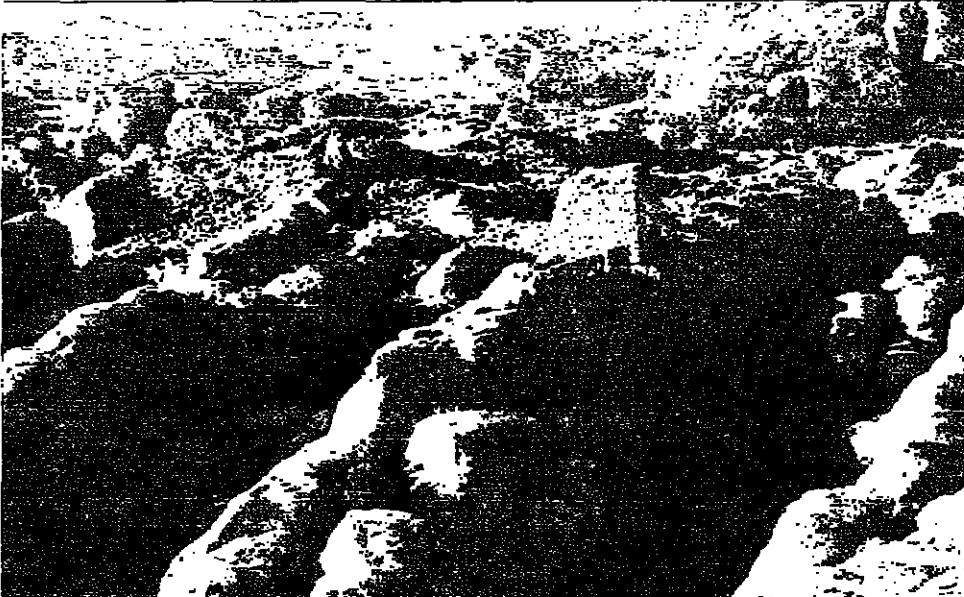
"Of this defensive system, Petra was the crux," says Vannini.

The proof is the fact that a society suffering from a chronic lack of men as the Crusaders decided to build as many as five castles in the Petra area.

"The closest castles in the north, Tafilah and Karak, and in the south [Aqaba] were around 100-150 kilometres away from Petra," notes Vannini.

Vannini and his team from the University of Florence, including Dr. Cristina Tonghini, Professor Franco Nicolucci, Dr. Andrea Vanni Desideri, and students and researchers, first started working in Jordan 10 years ago.

"We wanted to contribute to the study of the crisis of feudal medieval societies through an investigation of the Crusaders' presence here," says Vannini, who presented the findings of his yearly excavations in Petra at a conference organised by the Italian embassy and held earlier this week at the Royal



A view of the Wu'ayra castle site excavated by an Italian team from the University of Florence. Visible are the ruins of two of the castle's 14 towers and the 35-metre deep wadi that represented the first element in the structure's complex defence system (Photo courtesy of Anna Marx)

Cultural Centre

The Florentine team contends that the same reasons that led to the end of the feudal system in Europe were also behind the Crusaders' defeat in the Holy Land.

"Feudal societies and associated phenomena, such as the Crusaders, both lost to more modern systems [the emerging nation states in Europe and the Islamic state in the Middle East], which were based on territorial control from the cities rather than from the countryside," Vannini explains.

The sudden and total abandonment of the Crusader castles in Petra after the Hattin battle makes them more easily readable to archaeologists than other structures that have been restored and reused throughout the centuries, like Karak or other Crusader sites in Palestine and Lebanon.

"This is why we chose to concentrate on Petra, in addition to the fact that it was the

key to the Crusaders' entire defensive system," says Vannini.

The ring of Petra castles included five sites, four of which are known — Jabal Al Atuff, Al Habis, Shobak, and Wu'ayra.

Vannini and his team have been concentrating on Wu'ayra, considered the centre of the Crusader system in Petra.

Located a few hundred metres away from the modern entrance to the Petra archaeological park on the road to Beidha, Wu'ayra castle was built by the Crusaders and reused both neolithic and Nabataean elements. Neolithic tombs, massive hollowed-out stones, constituted the bases of many of the 14 towers in the castle. One of them, an imposing stone rising alone in the middle of a wadi around 35 metres deep, was used as an outer gate to the fortress, with two wooden drawbridges connecting the

castle's inner gate on one side to a narrow path on the adjacent mountain on the other.

Adaptations of earlier neolithic and Nabataean architectural elements, such as staircases carved in rocky formations that were transformed by the Crusaders in walkways along battlements, are characteristics of this Crusader site.

Also utilised was the previous impressive Nabataean hydraulic system, based on a network of reservoirs running underneath the structure.

"Each tower and defensive unit had an autonomous water reserve, so that even if one part of the castle were conquered, resistance could continue from another," Vannini explains.

"But the remains of Wu'ayra tell other stories than battles and wars," says Vannini. "The stories of continuous interactions between two worlds, who fought but also coexisted, influencing and enriching each other."

Government dismisses parliamentary report on Zai plant water quality

By Ahmad Khatib

AMMAN — The government on Wednesday dismissed a Parliament committee report on the quality of water reaching Amman from the Zai Water Treatment Plant, stressing that the water is "not polluted, and is potable and up to internationally accepted Jordanian standards and specifications."

Minister of Water and Energy Hani Mulki said the report, which claimed that water coming out of the plant is polluted, was "an inaccurate interpretation of scientific facts."

The report was submitted to the government and deputies yesterday by the head of the committee, Salameh Hiar.

"All local and international scientific reports have established that our water is free of any kind of pollutants, potable and up to the country's standards," Mulki told the Jordan Times. "I have tried many times to convince the deputy of this fact, but he does not want to believe this," Mulki added.

"He keeps repeating the same interpretations of scientific issues."

Hiar, in his 21-page report, said water is "not up to Jordan's standards and specifications because it contains dead worms [nematodes], fungus and high chemical concentrations, according to recent local scientific tests."

He added that "Mulki tried to change standards to judge the water's quality because he thinks they are too strict."

"Water specifications and standards are in accordance

with international levels, and we are satisfied with them," Mulki stressed.

"I have announced many times that there are no plans to change the standards," he added. "We at the ministry proved to all Jordanians that the water problem has ended, but it seems that I cannot convince him."

In July, residents of Amman, especially the western areas, complained of foul-smelling and discoloured water supplies, mostly pumped by the Zai plant.

The crisis culminated with the resignation of former Water Minister Munther Haddadin.

Many water experts and officials had largely blamed huge amounts of organic substances, including unusual levels of algae concentration in water coming from Lake Tiberias, for harming the efficiency of the plant's filtering system.

The plant, which supplies around 40 per cent of Amman's water needs, pumps 120,000 cubic metres of water per hour. Pumping was halted for over seven weeks while local and foreign experts tried to find a solution, including using super active carbon to get rid of the extra levels of algae and the release of freshwater fish into the canal feeding the plant as part of a biological solution.

Several weeks ago, Amman's prosecutor general accused nine government officials of negligence in connection with the crisis and said they will be tried by the Criminal Court soon.

Two of the nine face the charge of forgery.



Democratic Sen. Patty Murray receives a congratulatory hug from her son Randy, 22, during election night Nov. 3 in downtown Seattle. Early returns showed Murray, who is known as 'the mom in tennis shoes', with a commanding lead over Republican challenger Linda Smith (Reuters photo)

Voters defy odds, tradition and give Clinton boost

WASHINGTON (R) — Democrats Wednesday celebrated an unexpectedly strong showing in U.S. mid-term elections that buttressed Bill Clinton's troubled presidency against the lingering Monica Lewinsky scandal.

Republicans, who had tried to make political hay of the president's affair with the former White House intern in the closing days of the campaign, apparently miscalculated the mood of the electorate and were left to weigh the political fall-out from key losses in New York, California and the South.

Women, blacks and Hispanics rallied to support Clinton against threatened impeachment, confounding the odds by allowing Democrats to score across the board, picking up seats in the House, blocking any Republican gains in the Senate and winning the election's single biggest prize — the governorship of California.

"This is a party that's back all over the country, competitive in every region," said Steve Grossman, chairman of the Democratic National Committee. "I think voters spoke loudly and clearly ... Republicans in Congress ought to listen up."

The Democratic gains in Tuesday's election surprised political analysts and defied tradition. Not since 1934 has the president's party gained House seats in a mid-term election.

Although Republicans retained control of both Houses of Congress, the

result was clearly a rebuff. "This is a tough business, it's been a tough year," House Majority leader Dick Armey said.

"Everything serious about life in America has been drowned out with Monica Lewinsky ... it's been very difficult to get a serious message about serious public policy out in America when the country has been really obsessing over the president's antics in the White House," the Texas Republican said.

Other Republicans read the results as a wake-up call. Sen. Orrin Hatch of Utah said the party "has to get off its dime" and actively court minority voters such as Hispanics, African Americans and others.

Democrat Gray Davis ended 16 years of Republican rule of the crucial state of California. In New York, Representative Charles Schumer threw Republican Sen. Alfonse D'Amato out.

Among the other stories on a surprising night was the election of wrestler Jesse "The Body" Ventura as governor of Minnesota on a third party ticket over Democrat Hubert Humphrey, son of a former vice president, and a Republican.

With results from the West Coast still outstanding, Democrats appeared headed for a net gain of between two and five seats in the House. In the Senate, Democrats avoided a net loss of seats, a major disappointment for Republicans who had counted on winning at least two.

Women voted Democrat nationwide by 55 to 45 per cent. Blacks almost doubled their share of the total vote compared to 1994 and went for Democrats by 89 to 10 per cent. Hispanics also doubled their share and backed Democrats by 65 to 31 per cent.

Thirty-four Senate seats, 36 governorships and all 435 seats in the House were at stake in the elections, which was also seen as an unofficial referendum on whether Clinton should be impeached for alleged perjury and obstruction of justice arising from his relationship with Lewinsky.

Less than a month before election day, the House voted to begin an impeachment investigation into whether Clinton committed perjury or obstructed justice in trying to cover up his affair.

As election results flowed in, the recriminations started.

"This is a very great night. I never thought we'd do this well in my wildest dreams," said Democratic Party chairman Roy Romer. He said he had spoken to Clinton during the evening and "obviously the president feels very good."

House Speaker Newt Gingrich put a brave face on the disappointing Republican night, saying it was the first time in 70 years that his party had kept control of the House for three consecutive elections. "You would think to do something for the first time in 70 years would be a big deal but not among Washington pundits,"

Gingrich told cheering supporters in Georgia.

But he seemed certain to face criticism for his decision to run television advertisements in the final week of the campaign urging voters to punish Clinton for lying about his relationship with Lewinsky by turning Democrats out of office.

Clinton's former White House Chief of Staff Leon Panetta said the impeachment process would go ahead but with much less impetus. "I certainly wouldn't draw the conclusion this ends the process. I think it's going to go forward. (But) I think the election takes the steam out," Panetta said.

Texas Gov. George W. Bush, son of the former president, who was reelected by a landslide, said his victory showed Republicans had to be compassionate and reasonable to win.

A detailed breakdown of the elections showed the scale of the Democratic victory. Democrat John Edwards defeated North Carolina Sen. Lauch Faircloth in North Carolina while Democrats pushed Republican governors out of office in Alabama and South Carolina and captured Iowa.

Vulnerable Democrats held on in Senate races in South Carolina, Wisconsin, California and Nevada. In Kentucky, Republican Jim Bunning, a member of the baseball Hall of Fame, was the provisional winner pending a recount against Democrat Scott Baesler, a former basketball star.

EU defence ministers debate bloc's military role

VIENNA (R) — European Union defence ministers met Wednesday to discuss strengthening the 15-nation bloc's military role to cope with crises close to home.

Invited by the Austrian EU presidency, the ministers gathered for informal talks on the practical implications of the Amsterdam Treaty, which lays the ground for a common foreign and security policy.

Austrian Defence Minister Werner Fasslabend said Europe had to learn the lessons of Bosnia and Kosovo and find ways of intervening militarily when necessary in its own backyard.

"We Europeans simply have to be willing and able

to get to grips with European crises and conflicts, if necessary also by our own efforts — before hundreds of thousands of people have been killed and millions driven from their homes," he said.

The EU's defence chiefs are the only group of senior ministers who do not meet regularly for formal discussions because defence is not one of the "pillars" of the bloc's activities.

Fasslabend described the Vienna talks as a "brainstorming session".

The meeting's profile was raised 10 days ago when British Prime Minister Tony Blair presented a range of options on improving the EU's

defence role to his fellow heads of government at a summit in Poertschach, southern Austria.

Blair's defence minister, George Robertson, was expected to flesh out some of the proposals in a presentation later Wednesday. Blair said in Poertschach he had no fixed view on which option was best, but insisted that the primacy of NATO should not be undermined.

Blair also criticised EU delay and division in responding to events such as the Kosovo crisis and for relying too heavily on U.S. military leadership.

French Defence Minister Alain Richard was also due to present a paper. France

favours a more vigorous defence role outside the NATO military structures, to which it does not belong.

The issue of how to accommodate the EU's neutral states — Austria, Sweden, Finland and Ireland — was also likely to figure in the debate.

Germany's new defence minister, Rudolf Scharping, took part in brief discussions Tuesday evening but was represented at Wednesday's talks by a deputy.

Scharping said in Bonn Tuesday he had ordered a strategic review to prepare his country's armed forces for the expansion and reorientation of the NATO alliance.

Spain's talks with ETA seen as step towards peace

MADRID (R) — The Spanish government's plan to open talks with allies of the Basque guerrilla group ETA was welcomed Wednesday as a major step towards cementing the peace process following the separatists' ceasefire declaration.

Politicians from across the spectrum applauded the surprise news that Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar had authorised talks between the government and ETA allies, six weeks after the guerrillas implemented a unilateral ceasefire.

The spokesman for the Socialist Party, Alfredo Perez Rubalcaba, told state radio that contacts with ETA — previously considered unacceptable by both the centre-right government and the opposition — were important in order to understand the group's real intentions.

Basque politicians also welcomed the announcement and vowed to help push the peace process forward.

"If the government really wants to talk, there will be no problem beginning discussions at all levels," Amaldeo Otegi, the leader of ETA's political wing Herri Batasuna, told Radio Euskadi in an interview.

Otegi, who has been seen as a key element of moderation in the party and a reason for Herri

Batasuna's strong showing in last month's Basque election, urged Aznar's government to include all parties and all issues in upcoming talks to push the peace process forward.

Basque nationalists — from radicals like Herri Batasuna to the moderates running the regional parliament — had been repeatedly calling on the government to hold multilateral peace talks now that ETA had stopped its 30-year campaign of violence.

The nationalists, including Herri Batasuna which previously would not deal with the moderates, joined together in September and signed an unprecedented agreement calling for peace talks.

Just four days later, ETA announced its open-ended truce modelled on the Irish Republican Army's ceasefire in Northern Ireland.

But the Madrid government had said it wanted ETA to show with deeds and not just words that it was serious about putting an end to its violent fight for independence.

When the guerrillas declared their unilateral ceasefire in mid-September they reserved the right to keep arms for self-defence. ETA has killed more than 800 people in its fight for an independent Basque state encompassing parts of north-

ern Spain and southern France.

Government officials said the truce, recent moderation by various groups linked to ETA and the results of the recent Basque parliamentary election boded well for a move forward in the peace process.

The first step is the initial contacts with ETA to determine how serious the guerrillas are about renouncing violence. The next would ideally be a new announcement by the separatists promising a definitive end to the violence before more serious peace discussions could begin.

"The important thing is to move towards peace, and that must be done through consensus, dialogue and sharing information between all parties," said government spokesman Josep Pique.

Aznar was expected to personally take control of the talks, local media reported.

The moderate Basque Nationalist Party (PNV), which won the largest number of seats in last month's parliamentary elections, also applauded Aznar's step forward.

Inaki Sanchez, Basque deputy minister of justice, wished Aznar "good luck ... for the good of everybody".

Alice Munro wins Giller Prize

TORONTO (UPI) — Canadian author Alice Munro, who has walked off with this year's Giller Prize, says winning the award for her latest collection of short stories should be seen as an encouragement for all short story writers.

Munro received the prestigious award at a ceremony in Toronto late Tuesday for "Love of a Good Woman," a collection of eight stories about what people will do for love.

Munro, who has only ever written short stories, says: "This is a wonderful moment for me and I think it's a wonderful moment for those who can't kick the habit of writing short stories."

She says: "It should be encouraging because there are prizes such as the Booker that don't admit short stories to the competition. I think the fact that this does, that short stories are considered as serious writing on the same level as longer fiction, is a very important step."

Munro is a three time Governor General's Award winner for her short story collections "Dance of the Happy Shades," "Who Do You Think You Are?" and "The Progress of Love," which was also selected as one of the Best Books of the Year by The New York Times in 1986.

In 1996, The New York Times listed "Selected Stories" among the top eight fiction books of the year and in 1997 Munro was the first non-American to receive the PEN/Malamud Award for Excellence in Short Fiction.

The Giller Prize, which carries a cash award of \$25,000, was established by Toronto businessman Jack Robinovitch in honour of his deceased wife and book reviewer Doris Giller.

The who's who of Canadian literature was in attendance for the award ceremony. The three judges included author and former Giller winner Margaret Atwood, writer and broadcaster Peter Gzowski and author and former Giller nominee Guy Vanderhaeghe.

There were six nominations for the award. The who's who of Canadian literature was in attendance for the award ceremony. The three judges included author and former Giller winner Margaret Atwood, writer and broadcaster Peter Gzowski and author and former Giller nominee Guy Vanderhaeghe.

U.N. to verify nuclear test ban treaty with satellites

LONDON (R) — The United Nations plans to set up a global satellite communications network to detect countries that violate the international ban on nuclear tests, a U.S.-owned telecoms company said Wednesday.

HOT Telecommunications Ltd, part of Hughes Network Systems, said it won a \$70 million contract from the U.N.'s Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty Organisation to set up a network to make sure that countries comply with the treaty.

Some 150 countries have signed the treaty, which bans any nuclear test explosions or any other nuclear explosions and is expected to be ratified by early next year.

"The contract is a milestone in the task of establishing the global verification regime envisaged by the treaty," said Wolfgang

Hoffmann, executive secretary of the U.N. test-ban group, in a statement issued by HOT.

Pakistan and India triggered a storm of international protest in May by conducting tit-for-tat nuclear tests. Since then, both countries have said they plan to sign the treaty.

HOT's network will use a high-speed satellite communications technology called very small aperture satellite terminals (VSAT) that avoids the need for extensive infrastructure on the ground.

For the next 10 years, HOT will provide the U.N. group with services covering the design, installation, management, operation and maintenance of a global network of VSAT stations.

Some 321 stations will be put in place around the world, supported

by 16 laboratories, under the treaty.

These facilities will monitor the globe for evidence of nuclear explosions and transmit and receive, via HOT's network, a constant stream of data from natural and manmade events.

The processed data will then be transmitted from the International Data Centre headquarters in Vienna, Austria, to signatory states for review.

HOT expects about 30 stations to be connected by VSAT to the centre in Vienna by April 1999.

HOT will monitor the network's management from its European headquarters in Milton Keynes, just north of London.

HOT's parent, Hughes Network Systems, is owned by Hughes Electronics Corp, a unit of General Motors Corp.

Glenn back in space, but does his back hurt?

HOUSTON (R) — Does a 77-year-old back ache in the weightlessness of space? John Glenn, the world's oldest astronaut, was to answer that question Wednesday when he and three crewmates aboard the U.S. space shuttle Discovery were to fill out a medical questionnaire about their backs.

Astronauts on extended space trips often suffer back pain because their muscles weaken from disuse and their spines stretch out in the zero-gravity environment.

The short-statured Glenn, who is a guinea pig for geriatric research on the flight, said earlier his back was not bothering him but joked that he hoped to gain five cm in height during his return to space after 36 years.

The four participating astronauts will be tested for several weeks after the nine-day flight to monitor changes in their backs as they readjust to gravity. Scientists say the information may lead to treatment for back ailments on Earth.

The survey was one of several research projects the shuttle crew was to work on as they moved into their seventh day in space. Discovery is loaded down with 83 experiments and 20 laptop computers to help perform them.

The astronauts plucked a solar physics from space Tuesday and deposited it in Discovery's cargo bay. Wednesday, using the spacecraft's 15-metre robot arm, they were to pull it from its berth and hold it up as a target for

research on a new sighting system for future shuttle flights.

The crew's day began at 4:50 a.m. CST (1050 GMT) when ground controllers blared a fight song from Japanese astronaut Chian Mukai's university into the shuttle. The song, "Young Spirit," revved up Mukai, who later in the day was to take a call from Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi.

"That song always gives me energy to do my best. Another wonderful day with high energy," said Mukai, the only woman in the shuttle's seven-member crew.

Glenn, continuing a nonstop media blitz, was scheduled to tape an interview with "Tonight Show" host Jay Leno and chat with U.S. television legend Walter Cronkite during an event

in downtown Houston commemorating NASA's 40th anniversary.

Glenn, who in 1962 became the first American to orbit the earth, is retiring after 24 years as the U.S. senator from Ohio. Republican Gov. George Voinovich was elected Tuesday to succeed Glenn, who is a Democrat.

The shuttle Discovery, cruising along at 27,300 kph 560 km above the earth, has been performing flawlessly, despite losing five-kg door panel from its stern as it launched Thursday from Cape Canaveral, Florida.

The panel covered a drag chute that helps brake the spacecraft at landing, but NASA officials said it would not be needed when the shuttle comes home Saturday.

Cambodia opposition announces political platform for coalition

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — Cambodia's political opposition Wednesday issued a two-part platform for forming a coalition government with the ruling party of strongman Hun Sen saying a "lack of trust" was the main obstacle.

In the eight-page document, issued by Prince Norodom Ranariddh's FUNCINPEC party and the Sam Rainsy Party (SRP), the opposition appeared to have dropped its earlier demands that allegations of electoral fraud be dealt with first.

"FUNCINPEC and the SRP believe the underlying cause of the current deadlock is the lack of trust between the CPP and the opposition parties," it said.

The statement follows months of deadlocked talks in the wake of Cambodia's July polls which the opposition say Hun Sen's Cambodian People's Party (CPP) won through fraud and intimidation. Although Hun Sen won the polls, his party did not gain the majority needed to rule alone.

Amongst the "immediate" demands the opposition outlined were the reinstatement of breakaway armed forces under royalist General Nhek Bun Chhay, and amnesties for the general and other party members convicted in "political cases".

The document called for a guarantee of the safety of opposition members and leaders who have left the country so they could return to negotiate a deal and demanded free access to the media. Both Prince Ranariddh and Sam Rainsy left the country in September, saying they feared for their safety.

The document also listed "pacification" as a top priority, calling for the dissolution of local militia units, which are blamed for atrocities against opposition supporters and activists during the election period.

Under its longer-term "programme for a new direction" to be addressed once a government is formed, it called for the reorganisation of the National Election Committee and the Constitutional Council which it has accused of being stacked with pro-CPP members.

Both bodies rejected the majority of the opposition's complaints of election fraud and calls for recounts after the polls.

The opposition also demanded issues including "ending impunity" and respect for freedom of expression, association and assembly be addressed.

"For the past five years the government has failed to prosecute and convict any individual suspected of major human rights abuses," it added. Amongst the examples listed were a grenade attack on a rally organised by Sam Rainsy, the killing of FUNCINPEC party members after the prince's ouster by Hun Sen last year and a crackdown on anti-CPP protests in September.

city, so at least for this time I don't have to make a decision. Hopefully, next time around I will not face the dilemma I

Society on the move

Awards, awards — reasons to be proud

TWO JORDANIAN scientists have received distinguished awards in their respective fields of work from two sides of the Atlantic.

The more senior Dr. Hisham Khatib, an engineer and economist, was awarded the annual Achievement Medal for 1998 from the Institution of Electrical Engineers (U.K.). Khatib is the first non-Anglo-Saxon to be awarded this distinction. As a Ph.D. graduate of the University of London, where he also received a BSc in Economics, Khatib is one of the few engineers to have been admitted to the fellowship of both the Institution of Electrical Engineers and the Institution of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (U.S.). He has almost 40 years of experience in matters relating to electricity, energy, water and environmental issues, particularly in developing countries. He serves as a consultant to numerous United Nations agencies, the World Bank, and several other regional and international development organisations. He has published two books: *Economics of Reliability of Electrical Power Systems*, in 1978, and *Financial and Economic Evaluation of Projects*, in 1997. Khatib is a member of the Global Environment Facility Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel roster of experts, and the GEF Senior Evaluation Panel. He is also a member of the board of the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development.

Westward ho to "middle America" and



Hisham Khatib



Rama Abu Shmeis

the University of Iowa, where Rama Abu Shmeis is now a proud recipient of the prestigious Upjohn-Enz Award. The recipient of this award must be a Ph.D. candidate, have completed or nearly completed his/her research, and have a record of high scholastic achievement. Abu Shmeis, who is about to complete her doctorate in pharmacy, flew to the U.S. pharmaceutical giant's Michigan headquarters for the awards ceremony, where she met the other five top students to receive this year's award and cash prize. Part of the deal was to present a lecture, which so impressed the Upjohn chemists, engineers, pharmacists and biologists that Abu Shmeis has been called by the company for a formal job interview. Of the experience, she said, it was the most memorable of her life. A graduate of the University of Jordan, she was amazed to find that after her presentation, people approached her for her opinion on problems they were encountering that might be related to her own research. Abu Shmeis' name will thus appear also on a plaque outside the Dean's office along with past recipients from her university.

FROM THE ANCIENT: Coinciding with the upcoming state visit of German Federal President Roman Herzog to Jordan, and under the patronage of HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, the German Protestant Institute of Archaeol-

ogy in Amman and the Petra Stone Preservation Project (of the German Agency for International Development-GTZ) will launch a special centennial anniversary exhibition. Called "Crossroads of Civilisations," the exhibit celebrates more than 100 years of German Archaeological Activities in Jordan. The venue will be the Royal Cultural Centre.

TO THE CONTEMPORARY: The University of Jordan Department of Architecture and the Instituto Cervantes have gotten together to present an exhibition of "Masterworks of Spanish Contemporary Architecture." The exhibit will be inaugurated by University President Walid Ma'ani on Nov. 10 at 1:00 p.m. at the Faculty of Engineering and Technology. Following the ceremony, Professor Ignacio Arce, director of the restoration works at the Amman Citadel, will present a related lecture in English. Arce, whose work at the Citadel has been praised as well as criticised, as is the usual case with restoration works anywhere, will deliver his lecture at the Sa'id Mufti Amphitheatre of the same faculty. The following day, at the Instituto Cervantes itself, the watercolour works of Mukarram Haghondouga will be put on display until Nov. 24.

'IN' AT NIGHTS: When Rafik Kana'an

said he was going to add a cozy pub to his family owned already comfy and quite successful Marmara Hotel and its much frequented Merlin restaurant, that's what most people expected. Instead, Etab, as the pub is dubbed, has become the hot new night-spot for crowds, young, middle and so on. Thursdays it's almost impossible to find an unreserved table so call way in advance. Another new popular eatery is Casereccio — so popular in fact that a minister was spotted driving up the small alley in Abdoun where the establishment is located, and being in such a hurry to get to his table, he "inadvertently" parked his car smack in the middle of the alley, blocking rather unsympathetic motorists in back and in front of his car. Tch Tch. And for the sake of keeping with the tradition of our Arabic sister daily's news tidbits column called Ain Al Rai, we will refrain from naming the rascal.

GOAL: The National Orthodox School Parent-Teachers Association is pitting students against parents. In a charity football game to benefit underprivileged families and an extracurricular school activity, teams will compete from 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon on Friday at the school. The school activity to benefit from some of the proceeds of the event is a planned puppet show class.

— Jennifer Hamarneh

Science and Technology

How to impress a salesman at the hardware store

By Jean-Claude Elias

SOME READERS of Chip Talk have recently told me that my last four of five columns were somewhat philosophic when not frankly esoteric. Unsure if their comments were meant as a compliment and just to be on the safe side, I decided to get back to more down to earth but nevertheless technical computer topics, purely on the hardware side.

With the upcoming METS (the Middle East Technology Show, 09-Nov), Jordan's very own computer exhibition, later this month, PC users might be interested in having updated information on the latest trend in personal computing. If you're looking for a good, decent, middle-of-road machine, then most configurations will satisfy you. Any Pentium II PC you may buy now will have more processing power than most of us can make use of and enough features to please the demanding home and office user.

If on the other hand what you have in mind is the very best, you have to dig a little further. Start with the CPU chip. Don't settle for anything less than the 400 MHz chip, making sure that what you are being given is the "real" Pentium II and not the Celeron sub-model, a scaled down, cheaper version of the Pentium II.

The motherboard, the PC's main board, should have Intel's BX chipset, which gives you not only power and flexibility, but also enough room for future expansion.

The monitor should be a good 17" size with a dot pitch (DPI) of 0.26 or 0.25 mm. The smaller the DPI and the sharper the display. Most monitors feature 0.28 mm, just not enough for high quality graphics or photographs. For absolutely flicker-free images, the monitor must support high refresh rates, expressed in

chip talk

Hz (times per second). The higher the rate and the more stable the image. Ideally the screen should work at a vertical rate of 85 Hz, simultaneously with a resolution of 1280x1024 pixels (picture elements or dots on the screen), or more. You'll find that not many monitors comply with these specifications.

A good screen would be useless without the proper display controller, that is the card inside the computer that sends the image from the machine to the monitor. The controller should support the screen's characteristics (refresh rate, resolution, etc.) and have enough memory to do it fast. From a ridiculous 0.5MB in 1994, the typical display controller is now fitted with 4MB. However if you can afford 8MB or even 16MB on-board then you'll enjoy blazing, true three-dimensional graphics in full colours. Boldly refuse the older PCI standard and insist on an AGP-type card, never minding what the acronyms really mean.

When it comes to choosing the hard disk, the precise device that will store your data, an Ultra DMA/ATA4 model with 6GB of storage capacity is the least you should accept. Most manufacturers now offer such models. These disks are affordable (about JD250) and they move data at the speed of 33MB per second! Budget allowing, get a huge 9GB. Wide-Ultra 2 SCSI model that shuttles your data at about 80MB per second! Even if you decide not to buy the disk in the end (about JD 1,600 with its Adaptec controller card) your request will nevertheless impress the salesman.

Last but not least, don't neglect the main memory (RAM). Have as much of it as you can buy — it's never too much anyway — but start with 64MB at least. Windows 95/98 and all the applications that run with it are extremely memory-hungry. The new, faster type of RAM works at 100 MHz rate.

There are of course many other elements in a computer system that contribute to make it a truly powerful machine, different from the pack. The above however constitute the main ones.

Big-time hackers face the world's tiniest lock

By Sean Hargrave

In an attempt to thwart hackers, scientists have built the world's smallest lock. The briefcase-style combination lock goes inside a computer network and allows access to files only if the correct combination is typed in. The lock flicks a switch to allow a connection to be made to the computer files.

The lock is made up of six wheels, each only as wide as four human hairs. Each wheel has 10 notches, allowing it to be placed in 10 different positions. With all six wheels lined up, a hacker has only a one in a million chance of guessing the correct position that each has to be moved to for the lock to open.

The lock can be opened only when six arms held above the wheels by a bar are matched with a slot on each wheel. When the arms and slots are lined up the bar can move down and access to the files be granted.

To set a combination the network manager first must disengage the bar from the wheels. Each wheel can then be moved clockwise to the 10 notches. If, for example, all six were moved three positions, the unlock code would be six 3s in a row.

With the bar held above the wheels, the only way to slot it into the open position would be to know how many notches each wheel needed to be moved back again to find its original position.

Hence, with the above example, a person trying to dial into a protected computer would need to know that each wheel needed to move back three of its possi-

ble 10 positions to allow the bar to descend properly.

Effectively, somebody dialling into a network would have to know how many positions each wheel had been "scrambled" by so he could unscramble them. The lock would remain open until a new code was set.

Larry Dalton from the Sandia National Laboratory in Albuquerque, New Mexico, invented the lock. He had the idea before the technology became available.

He says: "The idea struck me that we could go the old-fashioned route with computer security but in a high-tech way. The only problem with building a lock small enough was that we had to wait for the processes to be established and tested before we could start building a reliable device that could be trusted to protect highly sensitive data without ever going wrong."

"It has only been in the past couple of years that we have been able to shape tiny wheels and place them on silicon wafers, and then apply force to them with tiny electric engines. A couple of years ago there simply wasn't the expertise or machinery to build something like this."

Dalton says the American government scientists were prompted to act by the increasing problem of hacking. "Computer security is such a huge issue now all over the world that we knew something new had to be done," he says. "Only the other day a local company here in Albuquerque had its computer raided across the Net and had all its customers' credit-card details stolen."

"The problem with existing measures is the firewalls that are built to keep people out of a network aren't physical; they're software. That means they will always be open to somebody getting around them."

"Most allow somebody trying to guess a password to have as many goes as possible. Hackers now have software available that will guess millions of passwords for them while they go and make a cup of coffee. If one is the correct one, they're in."

"With a physical device no clever computer knowledge will get you through. You get one shot at the correct six numbers. If you get it wrong, that's it. I guess if you had access to the lock you could use a microscope to figure out the combination, but then if you were that close to the device, you'd be next to the computer and could probably just pick up the hard disc and take it away with you."

The micro lock has been given six wheels to give odds of one in



A spider mite shows how small the lock's wheel cogs are (file photo)

a million, but for those wanting to make the odds in their favour even greater, two can be linked together to give a one in a million million chance. This is likely to be the case if the devices are used to protect nuclear weapons from being detonated by anyone without the top-secret codes.

The device has recently been shown to the American Department of Defence for evaluation.

An Internet service provider and network company are in discussion with Sandia about commercialising the lock. Dalton

believes this means it could be in operation within two years.

"One drawback with the technology is that it needs to be reset every time the lock is opened. That's the thing we're really working on," says Dalton.

"We need to get a system working whereby the wheels are automatically scrambled back to their original position so a single code could be used by a whole group of people to get access to data, perhaps a site on the Net to which they have subscribed."

— Sunday Times

Scientists develop brain cells that breed

By Steve Connor

SCIENTISTS HAVE generated an unlimited supply of nerve cells for brain transplants in the hope of curing patients suffering from illnesses ranging from strokes to senile dementia.

The researchers have identified embryonic cells in the brain that can multiply indefinitely in the test tube yet develop into fully mature nerve cells when they are transplanted into a damaged region of the brain.

Finding and culturing the so-called "stem cells" of the human brain is the holy grail of neurosurgery, because it raises the prospect of reviving dead regions of the brain that were, until now, considered to be beyond repair.

Evan Snyder, an assistant professor of biology at Harvard Medical School in Boston, said he had isolated the stem cells from foetal brain tissue and they survive and replicate outside the body.

There appears to be no limit to the number of brain cells he can grow in the laboratory from the line of stem cells he has established for transplant operations.

"This is the first report of a rigorously defined stem cell of the human brain that can be grafted into the brain. We hope to show

that we can integrate them in a seamless fashion into the fabric of the brain," Professor Snyder said.

One possibility is that the stem cells can be genetically engineered to possess the genes that are not functioning in patients who are afflicted with inherited defects.

A transplant with the engineered stem cells could result in rectification of the genetic fault and recovery from the disorder, Professor Snyder said.

Research published in the journal *Nature Biotechnology* shows that when Professor Snyder and his colleagues injected the stem cells into mice, the human cells developed into fully mature nerve cells.

A separate research team, led by Oliver Brustle of the University of Bonn, demonstrated that the human stem cells were so versatile that they could be fully integrated into the developing brain of rats to create a human-rodent chimeric brain.

Professor Snyder said the next stage of the research is to investigate safety by injecting the stem cells into the brains of laboratory monkeys. Attempts at a human transplant could begin within the next five years.

— The Independent

Boost for organ swaps

By John Hooper

NOW THAT French surgeons have transplanted a hand, their Italian counterparts are itching to sow on something that is just as difficult to cope without.

"We are ready. We could even do it tomorrow," said Nicolo Scuderi, lecturer in plastic and reconstructive surgery at Rome's main university, the Sapienza. "All we are waiting for is authorisation from the (health) minister."

He was referring to his plan for the world's first penis transplant. Scuderi said he had put together a team that could carry out the operation at the Umberto I hospital in Rome. And he already had a waiting list of three people, eager to be given a dead man's member.

Candidates would include those who had been amputated by accident or — like Wayne Bobbitt, the American whose wife cut off his

penis — by design.

The biggest numbers, though, would be those seeking to change sex — or even re-change sex.

The patients on the waiting list included someone who had started life as a man, had a sex change operation, and then regretted it, Scuderi told the Rome newspaper, *Il Messaggero*.

"Up to now, we have had to carry out reconstructions of the penis — an extremely difficult operation because we have to take muscles from the leg and reshape them," he added.

Transplants, though, involve huge challenges of their own.

The immune system has to be heavily suppressed, making the patient more prone to disease and raising the ethical question of whether the end product is a healthier or sicker patient.

There is also a possible legal obstacle. A recent law allows Italian doctors to use

organs for transplants only if the relatives of the prospective donor have not registered an objection.

"We want to know from the minister if this principle also applies in the case of penis transplants," the surgeon said.

In Catholic Italy, there is a big difference between next-of-kin giving doctors carte blanche to remove a loved one's hand and leaving them free to detach the potential donor's manhood and sow it on to an aspirant transsexual.

Scuderi is undaunted. He is already looking to a future in which the use of a dead person's organ would no longer be necessary because arrangements could be made among the living for "the exchange of sexual organs between those who decide to become women and those who decide to become men."

— The Guardian

One quarter of Palestinians living beneath poverty line

By Gladeer Taher

AMMAN — To the surprise of the Ministry of Transport, 35 foreign companies have shown interest in reviving a decades-old project for constructing and operating an electric commuter train system connecting downtown Amman and Zarqa.

According to a transport ministry official, 35 firms, mainly European as well as two Japanese, one Korean, one Chinese, one Canadian, one American and two Turkish, have submitted expressions of interest to the ministry.

The country's privatisation programme took a step back last week when the government suspended the sale of a 40 per cent equity stake of the Jordan Telecommunications Corporation to a strategic partner when one of the two companies bidding for the deal pulled out.

Foreign firms had previously shied away from the project because the government had originally expected them to finance the construction of the track making any return on their investment negligible, an industry source explained.

Now the government will pay for the construction of the track, after which it will lease it to the operating concessionaire, who will supply the train and all other necessary equipment to operate and maintain the system, the official said.

Donor countries had also been reluctant to finance the multi-million dollar light rail project because it was not seen as a priority despite the fact that it targets lower income groups in the Kingdom and meets the "government friendly" criteria attached to such financing.

No.

Company

Country

2	Embassy of Hungary	
2	Parail	Austria
3	Transurb Consult	Belgium
4	SNC-Lavalin	Canada
5	FEB-FSDI	China
6	Dogmoch Consortium	Germany, England
7	ZSBRNO	Czech Rep.
8	Taylor Woodrow	England
9	Alstom	France
10	Buc Freres	France
11	CGEA	France
12	Poma	France
13	RATP&SCNF	France
14	Spie Enertrans	France
15	TSO	France
16	Adiranx	Germany
17	DE-Consult	Germany
18	Grebner-Ruchay	Germany
19	Siemens	Germany
20	Wolfgang Weiss	Germany
21	Incon International	India
22	Ferrocemento Recchi	Italy
23	Firema	Italy
24	Salini	Italy
25	ITOCHU	Japan
26	Mitsubishi Corporation	Japan
27	Hyundai	Korea
28	ARCADIS	Netherlands
29	NRA	Netherlands
30	Nesco	Spain
31	NCC	Sweden
32	Archirodon	Switzerland-Saudi Arabia
33	Yapi-ICF Kaiser	Turkey
34	Yuksel	Turkey
35	Herzog	USA

responding to the transport ministry's public request issued in September to send letters of interest along with their qualifications to carry out the project, which will use the same historic Hijaz corridor between Zarqa and Hashemiyeh baza.

Companies can bid for the construction of the 26-kilometer double track electrified standard gauge, which is expected to cost JD 28 million, and/or the operation of the modern passenger railway.

Financial and technical requests for proposals will be sent to the qualified firms within 10 days to be followed by a pre-bid conference in January and final offers will be submitted to the government by the end of February, according to the official.

Recent surveys conducted by the ministry indicate that an estimated 40,000 passengers will use the train on a daily basis in the first year of operation, which is expected to ease road traffic and cut down on pollution problems along the busiest route in the country.

RAMALLAH, West Bank (AFP) — A quarter of Palestinians living in the West where the proportions were three per cent and nine per cent, respectively.

The report defines poverty as a family of six living on an income of less than 1,390 Israeli shekels (\$323 at current exchange rates) per month.

Strip compared to 16 per cent in the West Bank, said the report issued by the Palestinian Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation.

The highest levels were recorded in the south of the Gaza Strip where 51 per cent of Palestinians live beneath the poverty line and the lowest in Palestinian east Jerusalem and Ramallah

Britain cuts 1999 growth forecast

LONDON (AFP) — British Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown Tuesday sharply cut his economic growth forecast for 1999 as the global downturn bruises Britain, but insisted that recession would be averted.

He stood by pledges of a cash lifeline for Britain's ailing hospital and school systems and said that the public sector would enjoy a surplus this year, before slipping back into the red thereafter.

Brown reduced his growth forecast for 1999 to 1.0 to 1.5 per cent because of the global economic slump. The prediction was sharply below a forecast of between 1.75 and 2.25 per cent growth he made when presenting the current budget in March.

But he stressed that the government would stand by a 40-billion-pound (\$66 million) spending programme to rejuvenate Britain's crumbling schools and hospitals and promised a 250-million-pound cash injection for health this winter.

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Exchange Rates		Wednesday, November 04, 1998										ACCESS 4646888
CURRENCY	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT
CURRENCY	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT	UNIT
JORDAN DINAR	1.0000	0.1968	0.1927	1.8779	1.6390	0.1944	2.3469	0.2087	0.7124	0.7124	0.7124	0.7124
SAUDI RYIAL	5.2585	1.0000	1.0207	9.9448	9.7387	1.0287	12.4235	1.0946	0.4783	0.4783	0.4783	0.4783
U.A.E. DIRHAMI	5.1681	0.9757	1.0000	9.7427	9.5406	1.0088	12.1710	1.0726	0.3671	0.3671	0.3671	0.3671
LIBAN LIRA	0.9535	0.1006	0.1026	1.0000	0.9793	0.1035	1.2492	0.1124	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342
IRAN RYIAL	0.5438	0.1027	0.1048	1.0212	1.0000	0.1067	1.2767	0.1124	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342
QATAR RYIAL	5.1429	0.9711	0.9913	9.6578	9.4577	1.0000	12.0648	1.0832	0.3671	0.3671	0.3671	0.3671
RUSSIAN RUBLE	0.4263	0.0805	0.0822	8.8075	8.7339	0.0829	1.0000	0.0829	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342
EGYPT POUND	0.4370	0.9134	0.9323	9.9833	8.8951	0.9405	11.9472	1.0390	0.3671	0.3671	0.3671	0.3671
LEBANON LIRA	21.4831	0.0568	0.1408	40.3427	38.5065	0.2746	3.3135	0.2922	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342
US DOLLAR	1.4124	0.2867	0.2752	1.4507	1.5695	0.1680	2.0022	0.1784	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342
GBRITAIN STERLIN	0.8535	0.1612	0.1626	1.6027	1.5695	0.1680	2.0022	0.1784	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342
GERMANY MARK	2.3469	0.4431	0.4723	4.6037	4.3153	0.4653	5.0551	0.4851	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342
AUSTRALIA DOLLA	1.5236	0.3632	0.3708	3.6123	3.5374	0.3740	4.4526	0.3877	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342
FRANCE FRANK	7.8682	1.4858	1.5166	14.7758	14.4894	1.5299	18.4583	1.6237	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342
JAPAN YEN	1.6848	0.3113	0.3177	3.0956	3.0314	0.3203	3.8671	0.3408	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342
HOLLAND GUILDER	2.6456	0.4996	0.5099	4.9682	4.8652	0.5144	6.2084	0.5470	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342
SWEDEN KRONA	11.0561	2.0875	2.1308	20.9602	20.3239	2.1496	25.4872	2.4080	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342
ITALY LIRA*	33.2178	0.3462	0.4762	5.6000	5.5696	0.5614	6.9454	0.4872	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342
BRITISH POUND	46.4052	0.1409	0.3308	90.7650	86.0208	0.4126	115.5820	1.0075	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342
GERMANY DOLLA	2.3402	0.4230	0.4316	4.2068	4.1196	0.4356	5.2653	0.4631	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342
GREECE DRACHME	3.9433	0.7456	0.7810	7.4146	7.2508	0.7677	9.2624	0.8153	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342
CYPRUS POUND	2.8782	0.5435	0.5548	5.4050	5.2330	0.5597	6.7522	0.5890	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342
AUSTRIA SCHILLING	16.5184	3.1192	3.1838	31.0196	30.3766	3.2119	38.7508	3.4150	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342
CANADA DOLLAR	2.1573	0.4074	0.4158	4.0512	3.9673	0.4195	5.0610	0.4440	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342
EURO	1.1981	0.2269	0.2305	2.2461	2.1995	0.2326	2.8059	0.2473	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342	0.0342

MAJOR CURRENCIES AGAINST JORDAN DINAR				
CENTRAL BANK BULLETIN				
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DEPOSIT INTEREST RATES				
	1 M	3 M	6 M	1 YEAR
US DOLLAR	5.2386	5.2199	4.9786	4.7913
G.BRITAIN STERLING	7.2736	7.1750	6.9000	6.6929
FRANCE FRANC	1.0000	1.2363	1.3084	1.4166
GERMANY MARK	3.5000	3.5967	3.5563	3.5000
SWITZERLAND FRANC	3.5000	3.5703	3.5410	3.5000
JAPAN YEN	0.3522	0.4034	0.4366	0.4852

WORLD STOCK MARKETS					PRECIOUS METALS		
STOCK MARKET	INDEX	CLOSING	LAST CLOSE	CHANGE	METAL	ASK	BID
FRANKFURT	DAX	4705.08	4781.15	-56.07	GOLD	290.00	290.00
HONG KONG	HANG SENG	1444.08	1517.60	-148.40	SILVER	4.92	4.93
LONDON	FT-SE 100	5503.90	5525.90	-2.00	PLATINUM	341.50	343.50
NEW YORK	DJ INDU.	8706.15	8706.15	0.00			
NEW YORK	NYSE COMPOSITE	551.80	551.24	0.56			
NEW YORK	AMEX COMPOSITE	654.42	656.62	7.80			
NEW YORK	S&P 500	1110.84	1111.60	-0.78			
TOKYO	NIKKEI 225	14527.91	13852.16	575.65			
PARIS	CAC 40	3353.64	3559.60	14.04			
FRANKFURT	COMMERZBANK	4440.70	4329.20	112.50			

EU insists global turmoil no cause for euro alarm

VIENNA (AFP) — European finance chiefs have insisted that the recent global economic turmoil sparked by the Russian and Asia crises was no cause for alarm, and will not harm the imminent launch of the euro.

But European Commission President Jacques Santer did call for European Union (EU) unity in the face of the risk of global economic meltdown, saying Europe must not spend too much time on internal argument at the present time.

"We cannot be inward-looking. Faced with the crises, the time has come to unite our efforts," he told the ministers during an informal meeting before the euro is launched at the start of 1999.

Differences had to be resolved, he said. "We don't have enough joint positions, for example on the International Monetary Fund (IMF)," he said referring to current debate about reforming the IMF.

"What we say is sometimes disparate and contradictory," he added.

EU Monetary Affairs Commissioner Yves-Thibault de Silguy also expressed confidence in resolving a thorny issue over who will speak for the euro after its launch on Jan. 1.

Above all, however, he said there was no cause for alarm.

"There is no need to panic. Even though we are going through uncertain times, the

Referring to the euro's Jan. 1, 1999 launch date, he added: "Everything will start on time, even if international conditions could have been better."

Although the direct impact of the turmoil to the east in terms of EU countries' trade patterns is limited, the back-door consequences of the crises are beginning to make themselves felt.

In particular, the recent sharp fall in the dollar — precipitated by the slide in world stock markets — is a major concern because of its negative impact on the exporting sectors which have led Europe's recovery over the last year.

Hungary nets \$18.5b in foreign capital

BUDAPEST (AFP) — Hungary has lured \$18.5 billion in foreign capital since the country turned to democracy in 1990, an economy ministry official said Tuesday.

Mariann Csakvari, head of the ministry's investment department, said 1995 was the best year, when more than \$4 billion were invest-


ed from abroad due to the privatisation of large state companies.

"The privatisation process has practically ended. Now Hungary wants to offer good chances for foreign greenfield investment," she said at an investors' conference in the eastern city Nyiregyhaza. MTI news agency reported.

Hungary wants to offer new investors tax breaks and interest-free loans as well as up-to-date infrastructure in new industrial parks, Csakvari said.

The forum drew participants from Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Portugal.

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The Daily Crossword

Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

TMSPuzzles@aol.com

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ACROSS

- 1 Diving platform
- 3 Visual aid
- 10 Mid oath
- 14 U.S.-border lake
- 16 Poundage
- 18 Medical funds
- 19 "Beating Suddies" star
- 19 Nabokov novel
- 21 Cuckoo
- 21 Tussle
- 22 Stage
- 23 Dry ice
- 24 Tanzania
- 25 City on the Illinois
- 27 Get a hold on
- 33 Lohrlich 120
- 33 Enk
- 36 Star elements
- 39 Geller's mound
- 40 "You ... There"
- 41 Isamic tower
- 42 Norma
- 43 Generated
- 44 Moccamedes
- 45 Desant's location
- 45 TV drama: "Blue"
- 46 Fiction's power
- 46 "Changelin"
- 47 Lady
- 50 Unscripted fellows
- 54 Jangled in a dense mass
- 54 Designer
- 54 Casini
- 57 Author-hunter
- 57 Mecca hunter
- 63 Canvas at random
- 64 Chicago
- 64 Figure film series
- 66 Flashdown
- 67 March of Drums
- 67 "Groundhog Day"
- 68 The place
- 69 These exposed
- 70 Fashion
- 71 Mortal

DOWN

- 1 Shown in TV
- 2 Type of stage
- 3 Unarrestable
- 4 Of adolescence
- 5 Demer
- 6 Celeste or Ian
- 7 Make sense
- 8 Pie Wise of baseball
- 9 Body bulk
- 10 de corps
- 11 Singing cowboy
- 12 Racer
- 13 Lyondryd
- 15 Model and chuffy
- 18 Gradual impairment
- 24 Cheech's surname
- 25 Oxidation
- 28 Singer Crosby
- 30 Harvest
- 31 Poverty
- 32 Listening
- 33 Devices
- 34 Euphemistic oath
- 35 An American in Paris' star
- 36 Paulo
- 37 Perry's penner
- 38 Kingdom
- 41 Gracie call
- 45 Actress Richardson
- 47 Viewpoints
- 49 H.H. Munro
- 51 The Slip city
- 52 Decathlon tenth
- 53 Yelkovich
- 54 brown
- 55 Appropriator
- 56 TV partner of 54A
- 57 Valleys
- 58 Shop sign
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Peanuts

WHEN YOU'RE ALONE IN THE DESERT, YOU SINE SONGS ABOUT LONELINESS..

YOU SING ABOUT LOVE, AND THE MOON, AND THE STARS AND THE ALAMO..

MAYBE YOU COULD LIP-SYNC

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SHOOKEE!
POOL!
BILLIARD!

SORRY, LADS,
BUT YOU KNOW
HOW IT IS..

AFTER MAN
CAME WOMAN--
AND SHE'S BEEN
AFTER HIM EVER
SINCE

Andy Capp

I'M GIVING
YOU TWO
MINUTES TO
GET HOME
FOR YOUR
DINNER!!

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YES, WHAT'S SO NEW
BOY THAT ONE?

NOW WHAT THE HECK
GOOD IS AN ELEPHANT'S
HEAD IN OUR OFFICE?

I DONNO
BUT MAYBE
THREE HEADS
ARE BETTER
THAN TWO!

THE #1
MUTT N' JEFF
COMIC

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Mutt 'n' Jeff

THE BETTER HALF.

By Glasbergen

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GLASBERGEN

"They decorated my birthday cake with antacid tablets.
Am I that old already?"

JUMBLE®

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

FAHFC

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TCHAB

GEBBUD

KEWRAH

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Charold and Mike Argenton

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer: A

AN

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: EXERT WAGER TIPTOE NOBODY

[illegible]

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Industrialist wants banks pressured to extend credit facilities at low interest

REFERRING to the decision taken by the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) to allocate JD30 million to support productive projects, Samir Arabiyat, assistant general manager of a firm that produces coffee at the Sabab Industrial Estate, said it would be more feasible to spread such a facility on all commercial banks instead of limiting it to only one bank. The JD30 million is being channelled through the Industrial Development Bank.

Arabiyat said that since most industries have financial ties with commercial banks, businessmen might be reluctant to use the advantages of the programmes provided by the CBJ because they are given through one channel. He added that commercial banks should be pressured to extend the necessary facilities for productive and industrial projects to lower their financial costs and enable them to compete in outside markets.

The assistant general manager indicated that the capacity of the local market and the available channels in export markets are the two main factors that determine the feasibility of expanding existing industries. He asked that the concerned authorities work hard to open the Palestinian market to Jordanian products and to widen the Jordanian-Iraqi trade protocol.

Arabiyat urged the media to reconsider, the

prices charged for advertisements and to give special privileges to promotions of local industries so as the media would become an effective tool for promotion at reasonable costs. He noted that high production costs and the inability to compete are the key hindrances facing Jordanian export industries.

He said that exempting production inputs from customs duties, easing of many controls and refunding taxes would help penetrate international markets.

Arabiyat praised government efforts to enter into trade protocols that would fulfil the needs of local industries but noted the importance of minimising the procedures to enlist new products on the protocol. He asked that the concerned authorities expand marketing training and organising trade fairs in other countries and stressed the importance of those fairs that allow direct selling to consumers.

He proposed that the government extend direct financial support to the Jordanian exporter through sharing in the cost of shipping or absorbing all the transport costs if the exports were going to non-traditional markets. Arabiyat concluded by urging a more effective role by the Jordan Export Development and Commercial Centres Corporation (AJ Ra'i).

Major airlines to fly closer for extra lift

LONDON (R) — Five top international airlines have joined forces in a global alliance aimed at boosting their share of a passenger flight market worth almost \$300 billion a year.

They promised customers improved service through seamless travel benefits and transferable frequent flyer programmes, and for shareholders they pledged an early favourable impact on revenue and future savings in infrastructure investment.

British Airways PLC (BA), American Airlines, Cathay Pacific, Canadian Airlines and Qantas announced the link up, named "oneworld," in London. The tie-up will rival the Star Alliance set up last year by another powerful set of airlines.

"If there are cost saving opportunities we will pursue them," American Airlines Chief Executive Don Carty told reporters. "But the biggest opportunity is not in the cost line, it is in the revenue line."

British Airways Chief Executive Bob Ayling said oneworld was not a substitute for bilateral links, such as BA's alliance with American, which is still seeking regulatory approval.

Japan Airlines may join the alliance at a later date, the partners said. Finnair said it is to join the alliance as soon as practicable. Spain's Iberia has been invited to join.

Cathay's affiliate Dragonair, which serves mainland China, said it is mulling the benefits. The five members

plus franchise and partner airlines will serve 632 destinations in 138 countries. They carried 174 million passengers last year and have a total of 220,000 employees.

"Our customers have told us they want airlines to work together to raise standards of service across the world. Oneworld will do just that," Ayling said.

The alliance will be of similar size to the Star Alliance set up last year, which involves United Airlines, Lufthansa, SAS, Air Canada, Varig, Thai Airways and Singapore Airlines.

There is also a smaller, looser alliance linking Delta Air Lines with Swissair Belgium's Sabena and others.

Lufthansa said Star welcomed the compe-

tion but added: "We believe that we have a small head start with Star Alliance."

Together Star and oneworld's member airlines accounted for about a quarter of the 1.4 billion passengers carried on scheduled airlines in 1997.

The partners said competition will not be compromised and stressed that they have no regulatory case to answer.

Nevertheless, experts noted that the European Commission is asking Lufthansa to give up slots at Frankfurt under its probe into the Star deal.

Analysts said BA and American had to go ahead with the five-way tie-up even though the move may cloud the regulatory issues of their own proposed alliance.

"This is a very important step" said Chris Tarry of Dresdner Kleinwort Benson. "They are putting in place the all important commercial agreements and increasing their market presence, acting in a multilateral way."

"There's always the worry about what happens when you end up with two or three mega-alliances," said Simon Evans of the London based Air Transport Users' Committee. "What happens to competition, what happens to consumer choice, what happens to prices?"

Richard Branson, chairman of BA's bitter rival Virgin, said: "From a consumer's point of view, it can't be good news."

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Continue to push yourself hard. You could be in a work situation that's rather stressful, but don't despair. Although it seems like this will go on forever, it's actually a temporary condition. Make the most of it while you can. You can get something here and now that may not be available again for quite a while, so move quickly.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) There's something you need to say that you've been hesitating about. It's the truth, and you have the facts to support it, but you didn't want to upset the other person. Don't be like that. It's more upsetting to let this go unsaid. Clear the air so you can clear your books and get on to other things.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) There's pressure on you at work. You're using your imagination to solve problems even more quickly than usual, but today they'll be throwing things at you hot and heavy. If you focus on your objective, you can figure out what needs to be done each step of the way. Don't be intimidated just because you're in the spotlight.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) There's a financial decision to be made, involving other people, not just yourself. If you can't ask for a raise at work, think of another way to generate income. There's a job that needs to be done, and you know the person who can do it. Act as the broker and you'll be generously rewarded.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Today, acknowledge the people who have been working so hard for you lately. They need the recognition, even if you can't afford to give them much more money. Also, make sure they're strong enough to make it on their own. You don't want them dependent on you. The burden of making their decisions for them would slow you down.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Things will not go as planned today, so you might as well plan on that. Expect the unexpected and watch out for delays. A person who's been giving you orders may do a 180 and expect something different from what you had prepared. There are certainly lots of challenges, but don't despair. The day won't be boring, that's for sure.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You'd

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

love to get away, but for some reason you can't. Is it a financial consideration? If there's a class you want to take, but you're afraid you can't afford it, run out the numbers one more time. If this could be an investment in your career, maybe it's deductible.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Money is tight, but it's by your own choosing. You're investing in something that's going to pay off later. At least, that's what you ought to be doing. Be careful, however. No risky ventures allowed. Only do something you're sure is going to work, because you're going to make it happen.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You and your favourite adversary could get into a great battle of wits today. You two are pretty evenly matched. But it looks like somebody else is listening in, someone who is not necessarily on your side. Don't tip your hand in a negotiation by letting the other guy know what you have, or don't have.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) People will be more willing to talk now than usual. You, especially, need to be careful about what you say. You're good at planning ahead, and that's important. You and your friend could have a meeting to decide what you're going to do next, but only discuss your plans in private. Looks like the walls have ears.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) This could be a good day for romance. If you're like most Aquarians, you fall in love with a person's mind first. Somebody who stirs you by getting you motivated or giving you new ideas — that's what turns you on. Today, you could find a person who's talking your talk. If so, definitely set up a date for dinner.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Looks like there are some changes that you've been thinking about, and you can't put them off much longer. Tonight, conditions are good for storing things up a bit. In fact, it looks like an explosion is going on at your place. That could be you, doing your fall pre-holiday cleaning. Have a great time while you're at it!

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) A friend's emergency could hit you in the pocketbook. By helping now, while you can, you'll be making points for the future. Your friend has always been there for you, so turnabout is fair play. Show you can be relied on by going the extra mile for somebody who'd do the same for you.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Some people may think you're being annoying about money today, but don't let it bother you. You've got a big objective in mind. Are you going on a major vacation soon? If not, why not? Give it some thought, and don't let "not enough money" be the reason you don't do it.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) There's an old saying: You should tell the truth all the time, but you don't have to be telling it all the time. There's a correction that needs to be put in, but your problem could be somebody else's solution. If you spot a trick being played, don't let on that you know, yet.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) There could be a breakthrough coming regarding your work. It might be another job you're taking on, or different chores you're assigned. Either way, you have to learn a new skill, and that can be scary. Don't worry. You're in a good position to learn. You're feeling pressured, that's true, but you've got talents you haven't even tapped yet.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Have people over to your place over the weekend instead of going out. That'll be more comfortable for all of you. Looks like you could be pivotal tonight in helping solve a controversy between two intellectual combatants. They're both pretty smart, but they're missing the common sense answer to their unanswerable questions. To you, it'll be obvious.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) It seems as if a couple people in your life are determined to scramble things and change everything from the way you had it neatly organised. You feel like you don't have control, but that's not quite true. You may have to speak up. Be nice, but be firm and decisive at the same time.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Open communication conflicts today with somebody's need

to keep a secret. Don't blab everything you know, yet. There's more information coming out every minute. A person who starts out looking like a villain may turn out to be the hero. And don't do anything you don't want everybody to find out about, because the odds of that happening today are high.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Necessity is the mother of invention, and today that's especially true. You'll come up with lots of creative ideas, because you can't come up with the cash, or you don't really want to spend it. If there's a way you can make what you need instead of buying it, definitely do that. You'll need the cash for something else soon.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) It's a good time to talk and a good time to be quiet. So, you're getting contradictory impulses. That's OK. Now that you know, you can schedule your conversations accordingly. Don't let the person you're negotiating with find out everything you know before your plans are quite ready yet. That could be disastrous.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You'll notice that some people just can't keep their mouths shut. You'll also notice that things are changing because of the information coming out. Somebody's life is changing for the better, and somebody else's changing for the worse. Make sure you're in the first category by being careful what you say.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) There are all sorts of hassles today, so don't let them upset you. Do you know the definition of an upset? It's either undelivered expectation, thwarted intention or unfulfilled expectation. There's another huge hassle this afternoon, but by evening you'll have broken through to a new understanding. At least have that as your objective.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) There's confusion at your place again tonight, and it looks like there's creativity going on too. You're tearing things apart, but you're also putting things back together in a new and interesting way. You're in the mood to generate, and that's always amazing to watch. But don't be a spectator. Be a participant. See what you can build.

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Tyson set to fight again in Vegas; opponent uncertain

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Now that Mike Tyson has his boxing license back, he's getting ready to fight again in Las Vegas. Who and when, however, are still unclear.

Two London newspapers, The Sun and The Independent, and the New York Daily News all reported that the former heavy-weight champion would return to the ring Jan. 16 against Francois Botha of South Africa. The bout would be promoted by America Presents.

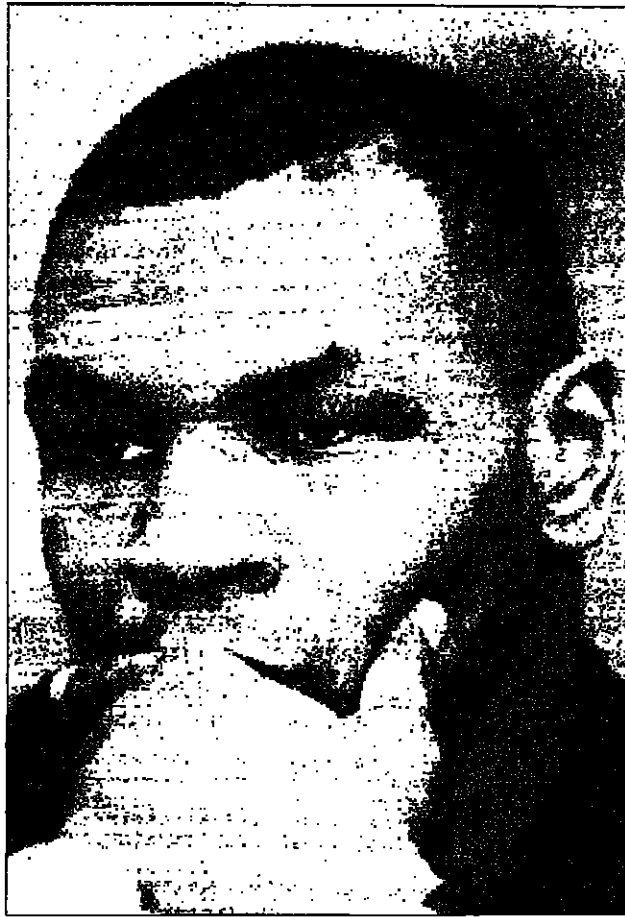
The Independent said the fight would be held at the MGM Grand.

The News reported that Tyson, who has had money problems after 16 months away from boxing, had gotten a large cash advance.

But Shelly Finkel, Tyson's adviser, said no deal had been finalized.

"Our plan is for him to fight in January, (but) Mike has not concluded a deal to fight anybody in January," Finkel said.

A spokesman for Frank Warren, Botha's adviser, would not confirm the Tyson fight had been made, saying only that Warren's



Mike Tyson

company was "advising"

A source in Las Vegas also said that no deal had

been signed and that Vaughn Bean also was being considered as a possible opponent. The source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, added

that Jan. 16 seemed a probable date and the MGM Grand was the probable site.

Another possible opponent could be Germany's Axel Schultz, according to a spokeswoman for Showtime, the cable company that will televise the fight. She added that the deal could be closed by the end of the week.

Tyson, who was suspended after biting Evander Holyfield's ears during their title fight, had his license restored last month by the Nevada State Athletic Commission. He still faces a Dec. 1 trial on misdemeanor assault charges stemming from a traffic accident Aug. 31 at Gaithersburg, Maryland.

Botha has lost only once in 37 fights, stopped in the 12th round by Michael Moorer in an IBF title challenge two years ago.

He is the No. 1 contender for Holyfield's IBF title.

French quartet sweep into last 16 as violence mars UEFA Cup

PARIS (AFP) — French quartet Bordeaux, Marseille and Lyon swept into the last 16 of the UEFA Cup with comprehensive victories in second round, second leg matches on Tuesday night.

Bordeaux downed Vitesse Arnhem of Holland 2-1 to progress 3-1 on aggregate, while Monaco crushed Graz AK of Austria 4-0 at home to advance 7-3 on aggregate and Marseille won 3-2 at home to the Germans of Werder Bremen to go through 4-3 overall.

Lyon won 3-2 at home to former European champions Red Star Belgrade to go through 5-3 on aggregate but the margin of victory was easier than the scoreline would suggest.

The round was marred by violence in Salerno, Italy, where Fiorentina played Swiss side Grasshopper.

A match official was taken to hospital and a player deafened after a blast, believed to have been caused by a powerful firework.

The fourth match official, Philippe Flament of Belgium, fell to the ground and had to be stretchered off before being taken to hospital. He was treated for cuts, bruising and shock.

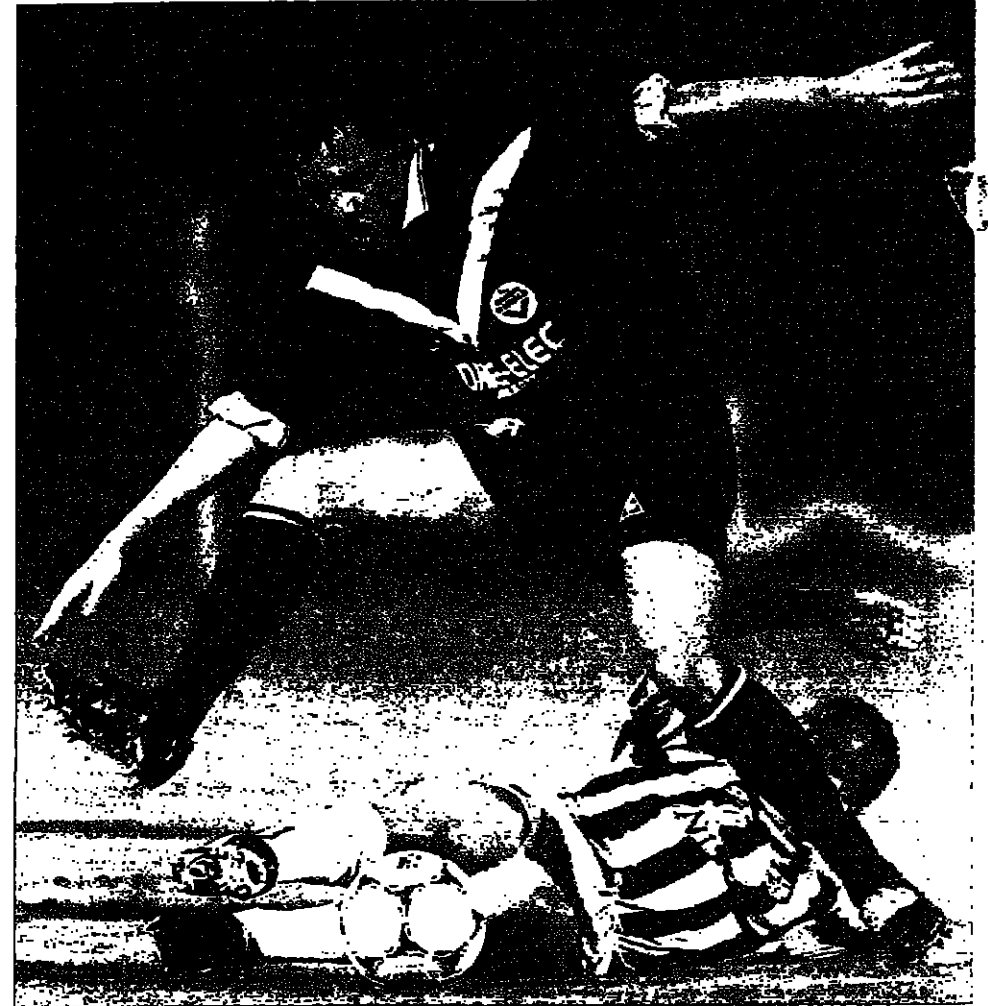
The blast also left Brazilian-born Belgian international Luis Oliveira stunned.

The match was called off with Fiorentina leading 2-1 and the Italian side — already serving a ban from playing at their home ground after crowd trouble in their 1997 European Cup Winners' Cup semi-final against Barcelona — face ejection from the tournament.

English Premiership leaders Aston Villa were among the big names to crash out — losing 3-1 at home to the Spaniards of Celta Vigo after winning the first leg match 1-0.

A second English side, Leeds United, also slumped out after they were held to a goalless draw at home to Italian outfit AS Roma — who were reduced to 10 men for the whole of the second half.

The Italians went through 1-0 on aggregate. Roma had Cameroon international Pierre Wome



Herve Aicarte (standing) and Vitesse Arnhem's Nikos Machlas fight for the ball during their second round return leg UEFA Cup match in Bordeaux. Bordeaux won 2-1 to qualify for the next round (AFP photo)

sent off in the 45th minute for a second bookable offence, but even they were rarely troubled by David O'Leary's young side.

Alain Cavaglia got two goals for Lyon in their win over Red Star and Christophe Cocard got the other, while Goran Bunjecevic and Perica Ogrjenovic scored for the visitors, the latter netting in the final minute when the result was beyond doubt.

David Linares was sent off for a two-footed tackle late in the game to temper Lyon's delight.

Marseille got goals from Florian Maurice, Pierre Issa and Christophe Dugarry as they edged past Werder Bremen, who finished the match with 10 men.

Belgian club FC Brugge, Real Sociedad of Spain and Italian pair Parma and Bologna were among other winners, while former European Cup winners Celtic tumbled to a 4-2 loss away to Swiss side FC Zurich and crashed out 5-3 on aggregate.

Monaco really turned on the style against Graz with midfielder Franck Gava scoring a pair of goals — his side's first and fourth.

Croatian Robert Spehar and Kaba Diawara were Monaco's other marksmen.

Bordeaux found the going tougher at home to a gutsy Arnhem side, but still had enough in the tank after winning the first leg 1-0.

The Dutch visitors went ahead through Arco Jocherensen, with a neatly placed header after just seven minutes minutes, but Johan Micoud equalized for Bordeaux within 90 seconds and the prolific Sylvain Wiltord put the result beyond doubt in the 65th minute.

Bordeaux midfielder Ali Benarbia was sent off in the penultimate minute for a second booking.

Parma strolled into the third round after an easy 2-1 victory over Poland's Wisla Krakow.

Stefano Fiore gave the Italian side a 21st-minute lead before Wisla defender Bogdan Zajac scored at

each end — an own goal just after the re-start and another past Parma go-keeper Gianluigi Buffon in the final seconds.

Bologna coach Carlo Mazzone settled a score with Slavia Prague when his team won 2-0.

It was an inspired move by Mazzone to send on second-half substitutes Giuseppe Signori, who scored in the 80th minute, and Massimiliano Cappioli, who bagged Bologna's second just five minutes later.

It was also revenge for a man who was sacked as coach of AS Roma in 1996 after an extra-time goal by the same Czech club denied his team a place in the UEFA Cup semi-finals.

Yugoslav striker Danijel Kovacevic, once of Sheffield Wednesday, scored a pair of goals as Real Sociedad of Spain downed Dynamo Moscow 3-0 to progress 6-2 on aggregate.

FC Brugge scored a dramatic 3-2 win at home to the Germans of VfB Stuttgart, advancing only after extra-time.

Stuttgart finished the match with only nine men on the pitch after having Pablo Thiam (65th) and Kristijan Djordjevic (72nd) sent off for repeated fouls.

The Belgians took a 60th-minute lead through Olivier de Cock only for Frank Verlaet to pop up with a header in the 76th minute following the sendings-off, forcing extra-time.

Gert Claessens put Brugge back in front, but Feddi Bobic then appeared to have sealed victory for the Germans on the away goals rule only for Croatian Alex Ilic to seal a memorable Brugge win with a header five minutes from the end of extra-time.

"Of course I am disappointed because, in spite of all the problems we had a chance to win," said Stuttgart coach Winfried Schaefer. "We fought hard."

Three South Korean medal hopefuls fail drug tests

SEOUL (AFP) — Three South Korean medal hopes for next month's Bangkok Asian Games have failed drug tests, sports officials said Wednesday.

A Korea Sports Council (KSC) spokesman told AFP that the three women — one swimmer and two gymnasts — were found to have used banned drugs "probably diuretics, for weight control."

The KSC declined to name the women. "There has been no decision yet, but the three are likely to be banned from going to Bangkok," he said. The council is to meet

Thursday to discuss the drug failures.

The three were among 210 athletes tested two weeks ago at the state-run Taeanung Training Camp, he said.

"We received the results yesterday. So we asked experts to conduct a second test for the three girls who are considered medal hopefuls in Bangkok," he said.

The council said the trio were among some 350 athletes whose names have been sent to Asian Games organisers.

Asian Games attracts \$92.8 million in backing

BANGKOK (AFP) — The Asian Games to be held in Bangkok next month has attracted 3.9 billion baht (\$98.2 million) in sponsorship and other financial backing, organisers said Wednesday.

Organising committee official Santiparb Tejavani said direct sponsorship raised 1.1 billion baht for the December 6-20 event.

The revenue also included government payments to date of 584 million baht, broadcasting rights worth 480 million baht and 240 million baht from participating countries.

Ticket sales had so far raised 312 million baht, he said.

The Thai cabinet on Tuesday approved an extra 500 million baht for the Games due to poor copyright and licensing revenues, bringing its total commitment to 3.1 billion baht.

The games are expected to attract about 10,000 athletes and officials from more than 40 countries.

NYC Marathon champion concerned about future schedule

NEW YORK (AP) — John Kagwe, two-time winner of the New York City Marathon, has a dilemma: Which races should he run? Should he try and run the 1999 World Championships or the 2000 Olympics, or both?

"I'm a little sore, a little happy, a little concerned and a little homesick," Kagwe said after beating fellow Kenyan Joseph Chebet by three seconds in 2 hours, 8 minutes, 45 seconds, the second-closest finish in the race's 29-year history.

"I'm concerned about the future of my running — which race to choose, whether to run the Olympic Games and the World Championships."

Selection for the Kenyan team is extremely difficult because the country has so many good marathoners.

In addition to Kagwe, there are Orodoro Oso, winner of the Chicago Marathon in 2:06:54, the third-fastest time in history and the best-ever for a first-time marathoner; Moses Tanui, two-time winner of the Boston Marathon; Chebet, runner-up to Tanui this year at Boston and second to Kagwe the past two years in New York; Josephat Kiprono, second in the Berlin Marathon in 2:07:26 to world record-setter Ronaldo da Costa of Brazil; and Elijah Lagat and Samson Kandie.

the 1-2 finishers in the Praha Marathon.

In the past, a country has been permitted a maximum of three marathoners at the Olympics and World Championships. Next year, though, the worlds will allow five per country.

How the unpredictable Kenyan federation will select its runners still is uncertain. Often, the Boston Marathon is the selection race, but not always.

That's why Kagwe, who finished fifth at Boston this year, is planning to run at Boston again in 1999. That doesn't necessarily mean that if Kagwe qualifies for the team, he will go to Seville, Spain, for the World Championships because the race is too close to New York, where he wants to go for a third consecutive victory.

"He's not that interested in the World Championships," his agent, Lisa Buster, said Monday.

"He wants to run the Olympics. That's his ultimate goal."

Kagwe was disappointed in 1995 when he won the Pittsburgh Marathon in a course-record 2:10:24, but was bypassed for the World Championship team.

"He wasn't very happy," Buster said. "It was very political. Two other runners with

times of 2:17 were selected ahead of him."

Kagwe is scheduled to go home to Kenya tonight and remain there until February, when he will return to his U.S. training base in Norristown, Pa., and prepare for Boston.

"It usually takes him two months to get ready," Buster said.

Kagwe was a marked man in Sunday's New York City Marathon. Wherever he went, the rest of the contenders tried to follow.

"He had to change his strategy during the race," Buster said, "because nobody wanted to go. The other runners were looking at him."

"One of our other runners, Julius Kariuki, tried to take people with him by going to the front, but the other runners didn't go after him. The others had a lot of respect for Kagwe and were waiting for him."

Kagwe didn't shake loose until the final 400 meters, when he swept past Chebet and outsprinted him to the finish line.

"I knew I was strong," Kagwe said. "When he passed, I didn't get distressed. I knew I could keep up with his speed."

Italy's Franca Fiacconi was the women's winner in 2:25:17.

Overall, there were 32,456 starters and 31,456 finishers.



Liverpool's Jamie Redknapp (L) fights for the ball with Valencia's Gaizka Mendieta during their UEFA Cup second round, 2nd leg match at "Mestalla" stadium in Valencia (AFP photo)

TODAY AT	PHILADELPHIA 1'	PHILADELPHIA 2'	PLAZA	CONCORD	GALLERIA 1	GALLERIA 2	Hisham Yanes Theatre
	Marlon Brando & Val Kilmer... in THE ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Pierce Brosnan... in TOMORROW NEVER DIES Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 9:00	Comedian Mohammad Huneidi... in SAEEDI AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	CONCORD "1" RASPUTIN Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD "2" 9 1/2 WEEKS Shows: 3:30, 5:30	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria Comedian Mohammad Huneidi... in SAEEDI AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria Harrison Ford... in SIX DAYS SEVEN NIGHTS Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Watch out for the new play

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Cuba lose one set at world volleyball event

TOKYO (AFP) — All-conquering Cuba shrugged off an opening-set deficit to beat Bulgaria in four sets for their second straight win at the world volleyball championships on Wednesday.

Seeking their sixth consecutive major title the Cuban women spikers lost the first set 13-15 in the Group B four-team round robin in Tokushima, western Japan.

But the Cubans soon steadied themselves and made no mistakes to take the following three 15-6, 15-8, 15-8 to finish off the 92-minute match.

On the last day in Tokushima, Cuba will play Italy, the winners over the United States 15-7, 15-4, 15-3, also for their second straight win to stay top in the standings with Cuba.

Both Bulgaria and the United States have two defeats.

A total of 16 women's teams were divided into four groups in the first stage. The top three teams from each group will advance to the two-group second stage.

Atlanta Olympic silver medalists China needed a tough one hour and 50 minutes to beat Croatia 9-15, 15-5, 15-4, 12-15, 15-11 in Group D in Kagoshima.

"We know Croatia is a very strong team, so we prepared for this match, but it was a very tough match. I think Croatia has been improving year by year," said Chinese head coach Lang Ping.

"I think our blocking against (Barbara) Jelic was the key to the victory. We were able to stop some 50 per cent of her attacks. Although we hit some winners, we owe this win to all of the players," she added.

It was a second straight defeat for Croatia, who lost to South Korea in their opening match also in five sets Tuesday.

South Korea overpowered winless Thailand 15-0, 15-11, 15-10, and now they will play China Thursday vying for top place in the group.

Russia, who on Tuesday avenged their loss to Brazil in a bronze medal play-off at the Atlanta Olympics, chalked up a 15-8, 15-4, 15-6 win over Germany for their second straight win in Group C in Matsuyama.

Brazil outplayed the Dominican Republic 15-1, 15-4, 15-4 with the two teams now level with one win each while Germany struggles with two defeats.

In Tokyo, hosts Japan scored a comfortable 15-5, 15-4, 15-2 victory over Kenya, while the Netherlands downed Peru 15-3, 15-6, 16-14. Japan and the Netherlands will face each other Thursday in Group A, both now with two wins.



The all women team of Jutta Kleinschmidt from Germany and Tina Thörner from Sweden drive their Mitsubishi Pajero through red sand dunes on Wednesday at the desert Empty Quarter 130 Km South of Abu Dhabi City during the second leg of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Desert Challenge 98 rally. Driver Kleinschmidt holds the fourth place in the general classification at the end of the rally's second stage (AP Photo)

Final speed test of season to be held Friday

By Roufan Nahhas

AMMAN — The last round of the Pepsi Speed Tests organised by the Royal Automobile Club of Jordan (RACJ) kicks off Friday with around 25 drivers taking part.

The event held under the patronage of His Royal Highness Prince Faisal is the 8th Speed Test of the year counting towards the 1998 Jordan Open Speed Test Championship.

A heated competition is expected between Yasser Jarrar who tops the standings with 137.5 points and winner of the 7th round of the speed test, Edmer Shishani, with 129 points.

Khatchik Shadian, who took second place in the 7th round and currently holds third place in the standings with 122 points, will also be a stubborn competitor to his rivals.

The speed test consists of two competitive time runs and a third run for the best ten times recorded for the day. Competitors are provided with a map of the route a day before the event and they are not allowed to

drive the course but instead they can walk the course for pre-trials which makes it more challenging.

Meanwhile, speed test champion of the 1997 season and winner of the 1998 Jordan Drivers Open Championship Ahmad Daoud might need a miracle to take an advanced place in the standings as he is in 8th place with 82 points.

Trophies and prizes will be handed to the winners at a special ceremony at the RACJ headquarters.

On the other hand, the 7th round of the Al Aswaq Cart Championship also will take place Friday with 23 drivers participating and only 12 qualifying.

Samir Al Rifai, who tops the standings will face second placed Mahmoud Qomouq trailing with a two-point difference.

The event might determine the eventual winner of the Jordan Carting Championship for the 1998 season as points are calculated by the best five races out of eight.

Graf reaches Leipzig quarters

LEIPZIG (AP) — In the second match of her latest comeback, Steffi Graf overcame a slow start and beat sixth-seeded Ali Sugiyama 6-4, 6-3 to reach the quarterfinals of the Leipzig Open Wednesday.

Graf, a four-time winner of the tournament who is unseeded this time because of her low ranking, had trouble finding her timing and clearly showed the lack of match practice early on against the quick Japanese.

But the former No. 1 picked up her game late in the first set and went on to post a workmanlike victory.

"I expected a tough match. She's been playing good tennis in recent months. I played her a few months ago and lost in three close sets," Graf said. "I knew she would be aggressive."

Graf was sidelined nearly two months after having surgery for a bone spur in her right wrist.

The 29-year-old German is now ranked No. 22 in the world, but she could still qualify

for the season-ending Chase Championship in New York Nov. 16-22. She also plans to play in Philadelphia next week.

Sugiyama, ranked No. 18 in the world, broke Graf's serve in the opening game and the German could not find her range.

The key game of the match turned out to be the third. Graf's second service game that went to eight deuces. Graf won a long and spectacular rally and then hit an ace to clinch the game after fighting off three break points.

"That was a very important game. I had possibilities to win it earlier and she had chances to break me," Graf said.

"Winning this game gave me confidence. I knew it'd be tough to win the first set if I lost that game. She put me under a lot of pressure."

Graf then broke Sugiyama's serve twice as she fought back from a 4-2 deficit to win five

games in a row, clinching the first set and going up 1-0 in the second.

The German broke once more for a 4-2 lead and held three match points. She wasted one with a double-fault, hit a slice backhand long on the next but the Japanese then netted a backhand.

Graf, who held the top ranking a record 374 weeks and dominated the women's game for a decade, now has a 22-0 match record in Leipzig, a tournament she helped found.

In another match in the \$450,000 indoor tournament, third-seeded Dominique van Roost ousted former French Open champion Iva Majoli 6-4, 6-1.

Paris Indoor Open New ball incident bowls over Norman

PARIS (AFP) — Eighth-seed Yevgeny Kafelnikov reached a third-round showdown against Britain's Tim Henman at the Paris Indoor Open on Wednesday when he completed a difficult 3-6, 7-5, 7-5 second-round victory over Magnus Norman.

But the mild 22-year-old Swede later claimed he had been robbed.

Norman, who was level at 3-3 in the third set and serving at 15-40 hammered down a blistering ace only for play to be interrupted while Kafelnikov handed the ball to the umpire complaining that it was a 'new' ball.

The umpire pocketed the stray 'new' ball and ordered play to continue but Norman was clearly distracted.

He went on to double-fault and drop serve.

"I was pretty disappointed to lose because I felt I was playing well and was on a roll up until the incident," he said after his defeat.

"I let it distract me. But these things happen in tennis and I think now that Yevgeny was right to point out the ball to the umpire. Next time I shall just have to take a deeper breath."

Kafelnikov, 24 and a finalist here in 1996, started slowly and admitted that he had been "too nervous."

But he insisted it would be



Andre Agassi of the U.S. hits a double-handed backhand to Italian Gianluca Pozzi during their first round match at the 13th Paris Indoor Tennis Open in the Palais Omnisports of Paris-Bercy. Agassi won 6-4, 6-2 (AFP photo)

very different when he faces Henman for a place in the quarter-finals.

Both players are still in the race for one of the

remaining qualifying places for the elite eight-player ATP Championships later this month — but both need to reach at least the semi-

finals in Paris if they are to have any real chance of playing in Hanover.

Henman has currently 2427 points and Kafelnikov 2049 — while the other main contenders for the vacant berths are Karol Kucera of Slovakia with 2559 and Richard Krajicek of the Netherlands with 2548.

"Tim wants to qualify so badly — I think he is going to be the one under pressure," smiled Kafelnikov.

"I have nothing to lose. My chances of qualifying are more difficult than his. In any case — the way I have played this year I don't think I deserve to play in the Masters."

"If I don't qualify it's no big deal. But that doesn't mean I shall not be going all out to win. I haven't beaten a player in the top-ten this year and tomorrow I shall have that chance. I think it will be a very interesting match."

In Wednesday's other early matches, seventh-seed Kucera put out Frenchman Fabrice Santoro but Santoro's compatriot Jerome Golmard continued his progress by beating 16th-seeded Albert Costa of Spain 3-6, 7-5, 7-5.

That result was only a minor surprise, however. Costa has never won a tour match indoors.

Becker leaves decisions until Christmas

PARIS (AFP) — Boris Becker, who crashed out of the Paris Indoor Open in a gripping three-set first-round match against rising French hope Nicolas Escude late Tuesday, refused to rule out a return to the tournament in twelve months time.

Becker, who has won the lucrative event in the grass-walled Bercy Stadium three times and been runner-up twice, shrugged: "I don't know if I will be back. Twelve months is a long time in a tennis life. I don't know what's going to happen. Obviously it depends on my health."

The former World No. 1, who will be 31 later this month, announced at Wimbledon two years ago that he was no longer going to play the Grand Slam events.

Ever since he has been winding down his career and so far this year he has played only eleven events.

"I have to think hard in December and decide what I want to do next year," said Becker who will bring the curtain down on 1998 by appearing in Stockholm next week.

"I'm not going to Australia and I'm probably going to start in February with some indoor tournaments. I'm trying to prepare myself for the Davis Cup so that I can play if I am needed."

"Obviously because I am



Nicolas Escude of France celebrates after winning his match against German Boris Becker at the 13th Paris Indoor Tennis Open in Paris. Escude won 6-7, 7-5, 6-4 (AFP photo)

playing less it's not easy to come back after a few months off. When I broke my ankle in the summer it was very difficult. But I made it back and I have been able to play some decent tennis."

"I know that the amount of time I have left to play is very very short. But every time I step out on court I still like it," he said, adding: "I don't know how much

longer I can do that but I shall not be afraid to stop altogether when the time comes."

The three-time Wimbledon winner, who has collected 49 titles during his career, last won a tournament when he defeated Goran Ivanisevic in the final of the Grand Slam Cup in 1996.

But he refused to be referred to as "a legend."

"When you are a legend you're supposed to be dead," he said. "I'm just a tennis player trying to do my best."

The German player, who first captured the headlines when he won his first Wimbledon crown in 1985 as an unseeded 17-year-old, also made it clear that when he finally quits the tour it will be for good.

"When I make the decision to quit it's going to be forever," said Becker, insisting: "I'm not going to be playing the over-35s or something."

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SAMEH MADANI, MANAGING DIRECTOR

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANIAH HIRSHI
GOREN BRIDGE Services Inc.

WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

- Q. 1 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 2 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 3 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 4 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 5 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 6 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 7 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 8 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 9 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 10 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 11 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 12 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 13 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 14 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 15 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 16 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 17 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 18 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 19 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 20 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 21 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 22 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 23 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 24 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 25 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 26 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 27 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 28 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 29 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 30 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 31 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 32 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 33 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 34 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 35 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 36 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 37 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 38 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 39 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 40 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
- Q. 41 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:
- ♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ K J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6

Iraqi Kurdish head meets Turks on north Iraq alliance

ANKARA (R) — The leader of an Iraqi Kurdish group met Turkish officials on Wednesday to try to appease Ankara's concerns over the formation of a Kurdish anti-Baghdad front in northern Iraq.

Turkey, fighting Kurdish rebels in its southeast, is upset by a deal brokered by Washington in September in which two rival Iraqi Kurdish factions agreed to resurrect a regional parliament.

Kurdistan Democratic Party leader Massoud Barzani said he would try to alleviate Turkish worries that the accord could encourage Kurdish separatists in Turkey.

"I will explain the realities of the Washington agreement," Turkey's Sabah daily quoted him as saying.

Barzani began talks with Deputy Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit. He earlier had lunch with a senior foreign policymaker.

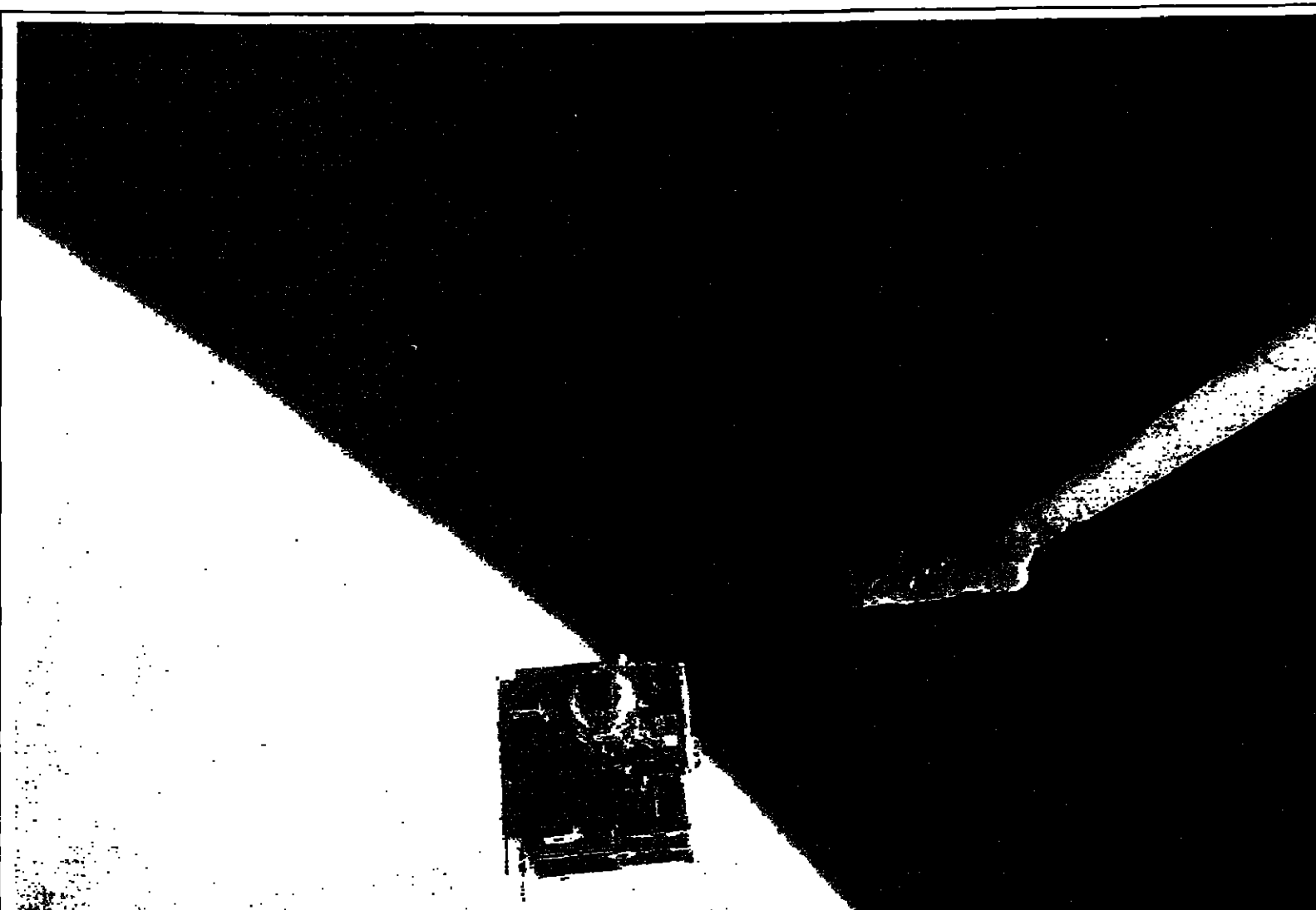
Northern Iraq has been out of Baghdad's control since the end of the 1991 Gulf war and is protected from any Iraqi government attack by a Western air force based in Turkey.

But Kurdish infighting has split the mountainous region between Barzani's forces and Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. The two Kurdish leaders were set to meet in Turkey at the weekend, diplomats said.

The United States, again at odds with Iraq over arms inspections, has often attempted to forge Kurdish unity as a counterweight to Baghdad.

U.S. Defence Secretary William Cohen is to visit Ankara on Friday to discuss the latest Iraq crisis with NATO ally Turkey.

Cohen is currently on a tour of the Gulf for crisis talks following Baghdad's announcement it was halting cooperation with U.N. weapons inspectors.



Backdropped against Earth's horizon, the Spartan satellite, right, leaves the cargo bay of the space shuttle Discovery on Sunday. The Canadian-built remote manipulator system (RMS) is partially visible at right. Two days after setting it free, space shuttle Discovery's astronauts retrieved the satellite brimming with hundreds of blazing images of the sun on Tuesday (AP photo)

Iraqi TV shows footage of UNSCOM 'spies' — report

DUBAI (AFP) — Iraqi television broadcast a special programme Tuesday on the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) on disarming Iraq, showing footage of what seemed to be UNSCOM weapons inspectors and charging them with being spies.

"Iraq was not far from the truth in accusing UNSCOM of spying on its vital and sensitive sites and security installations," an Iraqi television presenter said during the show, "The UNSCOM Spies."

"The truth is now as clear as day. Dear viewers, do you know who the spies of UNSCOM are, those who entered Iraq under false names and passports under cover from UNSCOM? Here they are."

The programme, which was monitored here by the BBC, then broadcast three minutes of video footage

showing what appeared to be four UNSCOM members. The presenter accused two of the four of belonging to the "Iraqi branch of Zionist military intelligence" and another of being a member of the Israeli Mossad intelligence service.

The fourth was a "Jewish immigrant from the United States who carries dual Zionist and American nationality" and whose father worked in missile research, the presenter said.

"These are the UNSCOM Zionists who are protected by the United States of America — Zionism's mentor throughout the world," he said.

Israeli security firms to take part in Doha fair

DOHA (AFP) — Israeli security companies, including its aircraft industry, are to take part in an exhibition of military and police equipment in the Qatar capital, an Israeli official announced here Wednesday.

Sammy Ravel, head of Israel's trade representation office in Doha, told AFP that 10 Israeli companies are to participate in the Milipol exhibition which opens on Saturday and runs until Nov. 10.

"We expect the exhibition to be a good opportunity to present the capabilities of

the different industries, among them Israel Aircraft Industries," he said.

"It's a good forum to exchange views, and very important for the promotion of peace in the region," said Ravel, whose office was set up in May 1996.

Apart from Israel Aircraft Industries, the delegation of around 15 people will also represent companies specialising in electronics, the optical field, night vision, and other advanced equipment.

An official of an Israeli agency, SIBAT, which coordinates the export of security

equipment, will accompany the delegation.

Eight Israeli companies also took part in the last Milipol exhibition hosted in Doha, in 1996. "Some of those companies have had success and it generated some business for them," said Ravel.

Qatar is the only Gulf Arab state, apart from Oman, to have trading links with Israel. But the normalisation was frozen after the election of Israel's right-wing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in 1996.

Iranian official sets conditions for dialogue with U.S.

TEHRAN (AFP) — A senior Iranian official set four conditions on Wednesday for a start of official talks with the United States, as thousands of people marked the 19th anniversary of the seizure of the U.S. embassy here.

"Our stand against the United States is not a political jest; it is a real struggle to preserve our international prestige," General Mohsen Rezaei, the secretary of the Expediency Council, a top supervisory body to supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said in a speech to the crowd.

"There are conditions before any negotiations. If these conditions are met, then we can talk about negotiations," the general said.

He demanded that U.S. President Bill Clinton "apologise to Iran at an official international forum for his country's support of 70 years of dictatorship in Iran," a reference to the monarchy toppled in the 1979 Islamic revolution.

He also asked Washington to "pledge to never again interfere in our internal affairs, to remove its naval fleet from the Persian Gulf region and release Iranian assets" frozen in the United States.

"As long as the Americans do not meet our conditions and do not adopt a more humane approach towards us, negotiations are not possible."

"The Americans are afraid of relations with Iran, because they are in conflict with their support of Israel."

They want to use the negotiation process and cheer us," Rezaei said.

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright called in June for a roadmap to pave the way for normalised relations between the two enemies. But her Iranian counterpart rejected the offer in September, demanding that the United States first end hostilities towards Iran.

Washington broke off ties with Tehran in 1980 after its embassy was raided by activist students, and all attempts to establish dialogue have failed so far amid strong opposition from Iranian revolutionaries.

Khamenei ruled out any dialogue with Washington on Tuesday, insisting that Iranians were better off without relations with the "Great Satan."

Thousands of people, mainly schoolchildren, gathered in front of the former U.S. mission in central Tehran, burning American flags and effigies of Uncle Sam in official demonstrations to mark the anniversary of the embassy seizure.

The staff at the American embassy were seized in on Nov. 4, 1979 and held 444 days, in protest at "hostile" U.S. policies towards Iran, notably the admission to the United States of the late Shah who was toppled in 1979 Islamic revolution.

Moderate President Mohammad Khatami in a ground-breaking overture to the American people in January, called for a "crack in the wall of mistrust" between the two countries.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Lebanese cabinet approves corruption bill

BEIRUT (AFP) — The Lebanese cabinet approved Wednesday an "illicit wealth" bill ordering top officials to reveal their fortunes and scrapping official immunity in a bid to stamp out high-level government corruption. Prime Minister Rafik Hariri said at a news conference that the bill was approved at a cabinet meeting which President Elias Hrawi chaired at the hilltop presidential palace north of Beirut. The bill was referred to parliament for final approval, Hariri said. Hariri said the bill updates a 1956 law, under which no Lebanese official had ever been tried for corruption. He said the new draft law would be more efficient because it "includes a mechanism to fight illicit wealth."

3 SLA militiamen killed by bomb

MARJAYOUN (AFP) — Three members of the Israeli-armed South Lebanon Army were killed on Wednesday when Hizbollah guerrillas detonated a remote-control bomb in the Jezzine region of south Lebanon, SLA sources said. The explosion also left one SLA militiaman wounded; the sources said. Hizbollah claimed responsibility for the attack.

Pope's visit linked to peace process

ROME (AP) — Progress in the peace process between Israelis and Palestinians could open the way to a papal visit to the Holy Land, a top Vatican official said Wednesday. Pope John Paul II has frequently expressed the desire to make the trip — he has an open invitation from the Israelis — but no date has ever been set. The Palestinians have also invited him. While the Vatican has never publicly set conditions, Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran, the Vatican's foreign minister, said a visit would be "more likely" if the peace process moved ahead. A papal trip to Israel is one of a series of thorny issues on the agenda of Vatican-Israeli diplomacy, but there are still divergences (with the United Nations) on one or two points of chief importance to Libya," he told a press conference here.

Libyan meetings with U.N. had no result

CAIRO (AFP) — Last month's discussions between Libyan and U.N. officials over Tripoli's request for guarantees on the fate of the two Libyans suspected in the Lockerbie bombing did not satisfy Libya's primary reservations, Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa said Wednesday. Musa, who made an impromptu visit to Tripoli Tuesday to mediate a solution to the impasse with Libyan President Muammar Qaddafi, said the New York meetings had not led to any significant agreement with U.N. officials. "I reviewed what resulted from the discussions with Colonel Qaddafi, but there are still divergences (with the United Nations) on one or two points of chief importance to Libya," he told a press conference here.

Danish FM cancels Jerusalem tour

TEL AVIV (AP) — It was either incognito or "no" for Danish Foreign Minister Niels Helveg Petersen. Israel officials said Wednesday that Helveg Petersen, on a one-day visit to Israel a day earlier, cancelled a walking tour of Jerusalem's Old City after discovering he would be accompanied by uniformed police instead of undercover security agents. Helveg Petersen left Israel for the United States early Wednesday. Imara Dotan, a spokeswoman for Israel's foreign ministry said Helveg Petersen wanted his tour to be low-profile and requested only undercover agents to accompany him. However, diplomatic protocol requires that foreign dignitaries be protected by uniformed police, especially in areas such as Arab east Jerusalem, occupied in 1967.

Israeli population tops six million

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel's population topped six million at the end of September, the Central Bureau of Statistics said Wednesday. The number of Jews, who make up 80 per cent of the population, came to 4,760,000, while the number of Israeli Arabs and other minorities came to 1,240,000, it said. Israel's population has expanded by one million in the last seven years, during which 520,000 immigrants arrived, most from the former Soviet Union.

Three killed in Egypt train collision

CAIRO (AFP) — A train conductor and his two assistants were killed early Wednesday when their train collided with a truck that had illegally crossed the tracks, police said. A train passenger was also injured in the accident, which occurred just south of Cairo when the truck driver ignored the bells signalling the arrival of the train and drove across the tracks, police said. The truck driver was not hurt. Forty-seven people were killed last month in one of Egypt's worst train accidents ever after ticket dodgers disrupted the train's brake system.

Lucky genes the secrets of Jagger's health

PARIS (AFP) — The Rolling Stones' singer Mick Jagger says that clean living, exercise and "lucky" genes are what have helped keep him a jumpin' Jack Flash at the age of 55. Jagger — whose name became synonymous with sex, drugs and rock and roll in the 1960s — told the French daily Liberation: "I don't have [vices]. I concentrate on my work." "I drink a bit, but never when I'm on tour. It's the same as far as drugs are concerned. When I work, I need to be alert. But I still like to have fun," the rocking grand-dad said.

Murdoch to marry Australian supermodel

SYDNEY (AFP) — Lachlan Murdoch, eldest son of media magnate Rupert Murdoch, will marry Australian supermodel Sarah O'Hare, his girlfriend of nine months, next year. The chairman and chief executive of News Ltd. popped the question to 26-year-old O'Hare over dinner on Monday night at a Melbourne restaurant. "Yes, they are engaged and propose to get married next year," she said. They plan to marry in Australia in what promises to be one of the international society weddings of the year.

Charles' birthday gift to be left behind

LIJUBLJANA (AP) — Prince Charles got a honey of an early birthday gift Tuesday — a hive full of bees — as he ended a two-day visit to Slovenia. The bees themselves will have to be left behind, a victim of British custom laws that prohibit their import. The prince flew on to Romania after his stop in this former Yugoslav Republic, and later this week will visit Bulgaria and Macedonia. Recognising his interest in beekeeping, Slovene President Milan Kucan presented Charles with the hive to mark his upcoming 50th birthday on Nov. 14. But only the hive will be allowed back into Britain.

Evangelista renegotiates fee after clumsy walk

LISBON (AP) — Linda Evangelista agreed to renegotiate her appearance fee at a fashion show after her performance was criticised as clumsy. Evangelista, 33, was the headline attraction Sunday in the city of Oporto, but press reports Tuesday described her as overweight and unsteady on her feet. Manuel Serrao, spokesman for Portugal's National Association of Young Businessmen, which organised the show, said Evangelista's agent renegotiated her appearance fee. He wouldn't give details. A spokeswoman for the Look Elite, the Lisbon branch of her modelling agency, said Evangelista had food poisoning.

Singapore concert-goers get to dance in Martin show

SINGAPORE (AFP) — Promoters for Latin American pop music heart throb Ricky Martin's show in Singapore this month are taking advantage of relaxed rules which allow concert-goers to dance. About 700 tickets for free-standing places near the stage will be sold for Martin's concert on Nov. 25, said Midas Promotions. The concert will be the first to be held since new licensing conditions for concerts came into effect Oct. 1, the Straits Times said Wednesday. "In the past, under the old rules, it was almost impossible to get approval for such a thing," said Michael Hosking, managing director of Midas Promotions.

Lebanese cross over to work for the 'enemy'

By Jacques Lhuillery
AFP

KFAR KILA — After a long work day in the factories of Israel, hundreds of Lebanese women return home through the Kfar Kila passage-way in occupied south Lebanon, resigned to earning their living by labouring for the "enemy" Israelis.

"I do not have a choice. There is no work for me here," said one woman who, like all those interviewed at the checkpoint, refused to give her name.

"Here" is the so-called southern Lebanon security zone, jointly controlled since 1978 by the Israeli army and its allied South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia.

The zone, caught up in daily confrontations between the Israeli-SLA forces and guerrillas fighting the occupation, has been almost entirely abandoned by residents and what economic revival that has occurred

has been minimal.

"There is nobody really poor or really rich. The people try to make it any way they can," said one shop owner.

And for some 2,500 Lebanese that means crossing Kfar Kila every day and being subjected to the humiliation of systematic body searches as well as the more symbolic humiliation of working for the Israeli occupiers.

"My employers are not friendly but they pay me regularly," said one woman who works in an Israeli dressmaking shop and earns \$400 a month — double Lebanon's standard minimum wage.

The women usually work in factories while the men are employed at construction sites, farms or hotels.

Most of them are bussed into Israel and cover their faces while crossing over what Israel insists on calling the "real border."

They hide their identities as much

to avoid questioning journalists as the blinding Israeli floodlights that are part of each night's return through the barbed-wire passage-way.

"For 13 years I have been waking up at four in the morning. After a quick shower, I head to Kfar Kila and then go to work at a shoe factory in Kiryat Shmona. I return at about five in the evening," said one woman.

Often those who cross over to work are snubbed by compatriots who refuse, no matter what their circumstances, to work in Israel.

But for many, economic reality means the Israeli factories are their only option, especially if they have family members connected to the SLA.

"I have two sons studying in Beirut," said one woman who hinted that because her husband was "into politics" — in other words, an SLA member — there was no work for

her in the rest of Lebanon.

"What can I do?" she said.

For the Israeli-armed SLA, the daily flood of workers is a kind of public relations victory, a way of showing that Israel is not just an unwanted occupier of Lebanon's territory but a way of offering poor Lebanese a step up the economic ladder.

"Our aim is to preserve good neighbourly relations for a time when there will be peace," said an SLA official who added that the workers who cross over generate some \$45 million a year for Lebanon's economy.

But that perhaps inflated figure puts the most optimistic face on what for the workers crossing Kfar Kila every day is less like financial opportunity than simply the most basic and necessary kind of existence.

As one young woman labourer said: "It is this or misery."